

Here are some stress reducing exercises you might like to try:

Relax Your Body

- Lie down or sit comfortably
- Close your eyes and take a few long deep breaths in and out
- Tighten your feet and toes, keep them tight for three seconds, then release them
- Do the same for your leg muscles, tummy and chest
- Then do your hands, arms, shoulders, and neck until you have tightened then released all the muscles in your body

Breathe Deeply

- Stand or sit in a comfortable position
- Close your eyes, relax your arms, shoulders and body
- Breathe in deeply, pushing your tummy out
- Slowly breathe out saying the word 'relax' to yourself
- Repeat the exercise a few times

Please remember that you can get help to manage stress – talk to your doctor or other health worker for advice.

If you'd like further support to stop smoking or would like more information on the NHS Borders Quit4Good Service please contact us on 0844 8118180 (local rate call, office hours Monday to Friday, 24 hour answer machine) or email smokingcessation@borders.scot.nhs.uk

Alternatively, for free advice you can call Smokeline on 0800 84 84 84 or log on to www.nhsborders.org.uk/stopsmoking or www.canstopsmoking.com

This leaflet is available in large print, alternative languages and computer formats. Please contact us on 01835 825970 to request any of these versions.



Handle Stress Without Smoking

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Improving Health in Our Scottish Borders
In Partnership With NHS Borders, Scottish Borders Council & The Voluntary Sector

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Day to day stress can wear you down. For many people the greatest threat to living smokefree is the steady stream of stress that flows day after day – things like arguing with your children or partner, money worries, or facing a deadline at work. So, to ensure that you remain off cigarettes you will want to come up with new ways to manage daily stress.

You might have been in the habit of lighting up in stressful times: when things have gone wrong or when you're bored, or to take a break between tasks. But in actual fact, smoking increases your stress levels because of the constant need to top up nicotine levels. Sometimes it is taking a break that reduces stress, not the cigarette you smoke during it.

When you quit, you need to choose other ways of dealing with stress. The first step is to recognise stress and realise that you can manage it.

Choose New Ways to Deal with Stress

- **Take time out and remove yourself from situations when they become stressful**
- **Talk to someone you can trust**
- **Take some exercise or go for a walk – any form of exercise improves your mood and calms you down**
- **Squeeze a stress ball**
- **Take one thing at a time**
- **Buy a treat with the money you've saved from not buying cigarettes**
- **When you've got a stressful situation coming up, plan how you'll cope with it**
- **Practice relaxation or breathing deeply**
- **Create a quiet place where you can sit and read or listen to music**
- **Have a bath**

Change Routines

Your normal routine will make you think of lighting up automatically at certain times. The trick is to change the order you do things, or do things differently. For example, have a shower before your breakfast to break the routine of having a cigarette first thing in the morning, or take the bus or walk to work if you usually smoke in your car. At work take a walk around the office or offer to make your colleagues some tea instead of going outside for a cigarette break.

