

# Managing cravings at work



When UHD goes smoke free, it may make it harder for you to smoke while at work as you will need to leave the Trust's grounds. Managing cravings can be tough, but there are several strategies that can help you get through them.

- **Distract yourself**

Engage in an activity that keeps your hands and mind busy - a conversation with colleagues/patients, check ward equipment or organise supplies.

- **Deep breathing exercises**

Breathing exercises can help reduce the intensity of cravings and help you refocus.

- **Drink water**

Drinking something can mimic the hand-to-mouth motion of smoking while chewing gum or mints can give you a similar sensation to smoking.



- **Practice mindfulness or meditation**

Try to stay in the present moment, focusing on your thoughts and emotions without judgment. Apps like Calm or Headspace can be very helpful. Headspace is currently free for NHS workers.



- **Get moving**

Go for a walk, stretch, or do a ward round to check in on your patients. Physical activity can help distract from the craving and release endorphins.



- **Change your routine**

If you usually smoke at specific times, like after meals, try to break the pattern by changing your routine. Maybe head to the canteens rather than going outside.

- **Positive reframing**

Think about the benefits of avoiding cigarettes: better health, saving money, and feeling proud of yourself.

- **Seek support**

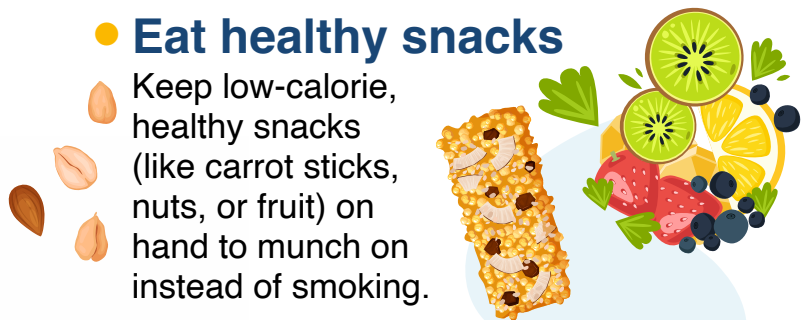
Talk to someone who understands what you're going through. Having someone to lean on can be very helpful.

- **Get enough sleep**

Fatigue can make cravings stronger, so make sure you're getting adequate rest to help manage stress and cravings.

- **Eat healthy snacks**

Keep low-calorie, healthy snacks (like carrot sticks, nuts, or fruit) on hand to munch on instead of smoking.



- **Remind yourself of the unwanted effects**

Sometimes reflecting on the long-term consequences of smoking can help you to avoid smoking in the short term.

