

## Cigarettes continued

associated with smoking," Shipley said.

First, students should determine a practical rather than an ideological reason to quit. Quitting smoking because you lose your breath from climbing the dormitory stairs can be more motivating than quitting only because you 'ought' to quit.

Shipley, who smoked for ten years before quitting, said that most ex-smokers soon forget why they quit in the first

place. He said those wanting to quit should post their reasons in prominent places to constantly remind themselves of their intentions.

Next, decide whether you want to try quitting cold turkey or whether you want gradually to reduce the amount of nicotine inhaled.

Shipley said you should avoid trying to quit by gradually reducing the number of cigarettes. Trying to quit this way is like trying to end a love affair by gradually seeing the person less and less. Perhaps it

can be done, but it is very painful.

If you choose a gradual route, try to reduce your nicotine by no more than 40 percent each week. If you're smoking Marlboro Kings now, which contain 1 milligram of nicotine, you should switch to a brand with .6 milligrams, such as True 100's for one week, then to a brand with .3 milligrams, such as Kent III Kings. Then, with less nicotine in your system, quit cold turkey.

who switch to low-nicotine cigarettes don't like the brand so they find it easier to quit altogether," Shipley said. Also, smokers usually feel better after gradually reducing nicotine intake and it gives them the self-confidence to quit, he said.

Those switching to brands lower in nicotine are cautioned, however, not to compensate by smoking more cigarettes, or drawing smoke deeper into the lungs.

"A lot of smokers

No matter how you

plan to quit, it is important to enlist allies, Shipley said. Tell these friends or relatives of your plans to quit, ask for their support and discuss with them specifically how they can help. You might ask them to help talk you through an urge to smoke.

Finally, look at the calendar and plan a quit-smoking date. And don't choose a date associated with stress, such as exam time.

Then avoid temptations to smoke by destroying your cigarettes. Keep away from smokers and smoky places. Shipley said quitters also should avoid the party scene for at least a couple of weeks.

If you go to a party and drink, the temptation may be too great to avoid a drag.

Pulling out of the party circuit for a while may be difficult, but no one said quitting smoking was easy. "Under the best of circumstances, smoking is a very difficult habit to break," Shipley said. "Studies have shown that quitting smoking is as difficult as quitting heroin or other drug addictions."

Once smokers kick the habit, they should develop coping techniques to help them from picking up another cigarette. Remind yourself that urges to smoke are only temporary. Think about what you can buy with the money no longer wasted on cigarettes.

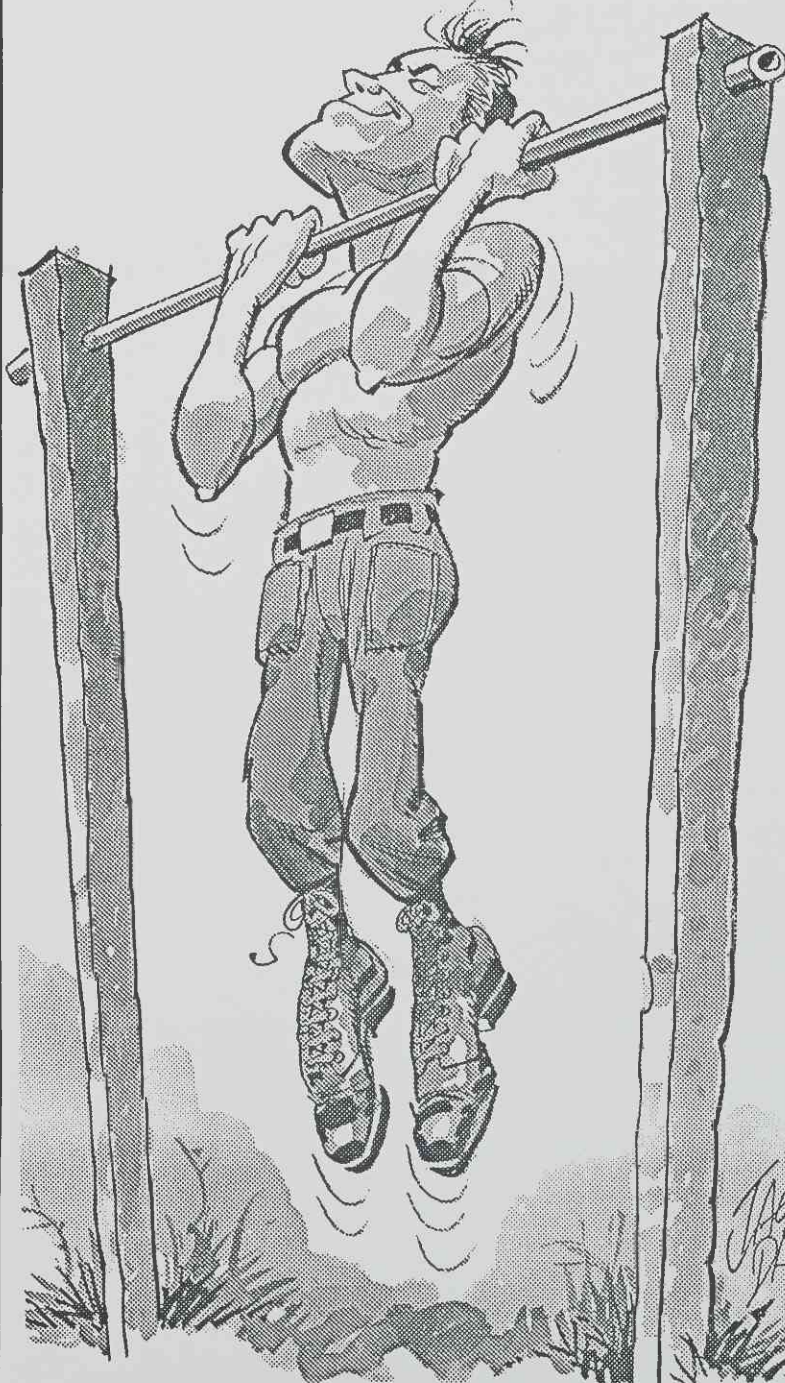
Properly express your frustrations and anger. Pound a pillow. Take a walk. Find a cigarette substitute, such as gum or sunflower seeds.

But, most important, stay on the wagon. Three of four ex-smokers who have 'just one' after the quit date return to regular smoking.

And, after six months of freedom from smoking, celebrate. You deserve it.

Ed. note: This article is one of a series of articles contributed by Duke University Medical Center.

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