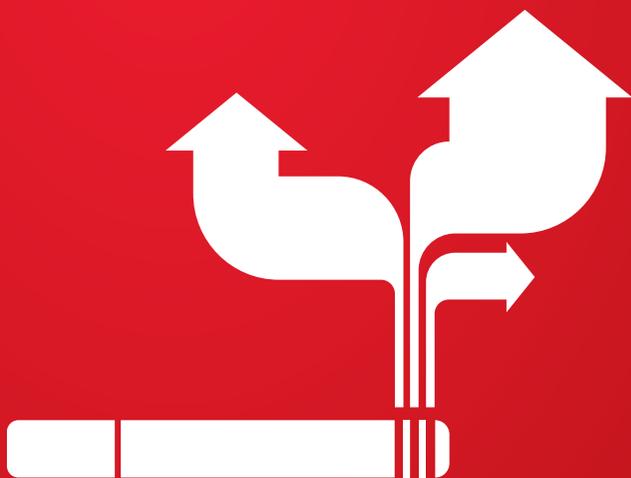




British Heart  
Foundation

HEALTH AT WORK  
**QUIT  
SMOKING**



**FIGHT  
FOR EVERY  
HEARTBEAT**

[bhf.org.uk](http://bhf.org.uk)

# CONTENTS

1	Introduction	3
2	Why stopping smoking matters	4
3	Your smokefree workplace	8
4	Helping staff stop smoking	10
5	Support and resources	18



# I INTRODUCTION

**Stopping smoking is the single most important step a smoker can take to protect the health of their heart – and the majority of smokers really want to quit. If you can promote quitting in your workplace and put the right practical support in place, it could be a great success for your colleagues and your business.**

## How to use this toolkit

**This is booklet 5 of your *Health at Work toolkit*.**

**The complete toolkit covers:**

- Launch a successful programme (booklet 1)
- Physical activity (booklet 2)
- Healthy eating (booklet 3)
- Mental wellbeing (booklet 4)
- Stopping smoking (booklet 5)
- Alcohol awareness (booklet 6).

This booklet is all about stopping smoking, and it's a crucial part of your overall mission.

## Get more support online

Where you see a weblink, it means you can download extra information from the BHF Health at Work website [bhf.org.uk/healthatwork](http://bhf.org.uk/healthatwork)

## 2 WHY STOPPING SMOKING MATTERS

**Tobacco smoke is nasty stuff – it contains over 4,000 chemicals. Every time someone smokes, these enter their lungs and go straight into their bloodstream and body tissues. The result: an increased risk of developing coronary heart disease, stroke and cancer.**

**There are around 10 million adult smokers in the UK.** About half of persistent smokers will eventually be killed by their habit. Each year, over 100,000 smokers in the UK die from smoking-related causes.<sup>1</sup>

When it comes to heart health, the issues are even starker. Smokers have at least twice the risk of having a heart attack compared with people who have never smoked. In the UK, an estimated 22,000 deaths from heart and circulatory disease can be attributed to smoking each year.<sup>2</sup>

Smoking damages the lining of your arteries, leading to a build up of fatty material (atheroma) which narrows the artery. This can cause angina, a heart attack or a stroke.

Stopping smoking is the single most important step a smoker can take to protect the health of their heart.

### **Why helping staff to stop smoking is good news for business**

Firstly, it matters to the bottom line. Smoking costs the UK around £15 billion each year; this includes the cost to the NHS in treating smoking-related diseases, smoking-related sick days and cost to businesses for smoking breaks<sup>3</sup>. Reducing the number of adult smokers leads to more productivity, less sickness absence, and means you're complying with legislation in this area.

It's also about doing the right thing by your staff. People spend a large proportion of their life at work. The workplace has a big effect on behaviour and employees can support each other to quit. Creating a smokefree environment makes it easier to stay the course.

## Why it matters for employers

If you help staff stop smoking, your whole business benefits from:

- **Improved productivity** – less breaks and ill health
- **Reduced absenteeism** – less smokers off work sick
- **Better morale** – cigarette breaks often annoy non-smokers
- **Demonstrates corporate social responsibility** – employees feel cared for
- **Improved public image** – fewer smokers outside the workplace, less littering, noise and fire risk.

If smoking takes place around colleagues, it's putting them at risk too. Research shows that exposure to second-hand smoke can make asthma and allergies worse, and in the long term can increase the risk of developing lung cancer and coronary heart disease.

Reducing levels of smoking among workers can help reduce cardio-respiratory diseases – one of the main causes of sickness absence.

To find out more about the benefits of stopping smoking for employers, visit [bhf.org.uk/smokingatwork](http://bhf.org.uk/smokingatwork)

For help building a business case, visit [bhf.org.uk/makingthecase](http://bhf.org.uk/makingthecase)

There are a number of online cost calculators to help you work out smoking costs to your business including *Healthy workplaces: Smoking calculator* – visit [healthyworkplaces.co.uk](http://healthyworkplaces.co.uk)

# 100,000

**Each year over 100,000 smokers die from smoking-related causes in the UK**

## Why it matters for employees

Employees who have been smoking for a while might feel like the damage has already been done. But that's not necessarily the case. However long someone has been smoking, it's always worth giving up. The health benefits start very quickly after stopping smoking:

- **20 minutes** Blood pressure and pulse return to normal.
- **8 hours** Nicotine and carbon monoxide levels in the blood are halved.
- **24 hours** Carbon monoxide will be eliminated from the body and lungs will have started to clear out the tar that's been clogging them up.
- **48 hours** No nicotine left in the body. The ability to taste and smell improves.
- **72 hours** Breathing becomes easier and energy levels increase.
- **2-12 weeks** Circulation improves and exercise can be easier.
- **3-9 months** Coughing and wheezing decline and lung function improves.
- **1 year** The risk of having a heart attack reduces by half compared to that of a smoker.

### There's more good news. Other benefits of stopping smoking include:

- **more money** – a 20 a-day smoker spends over £3,100 a year on cigarettes
- **feel healthier** – improved fitness and energy levels
- **improved appearance** – better skin, eyes, hair and teeth
- **refreshed senses** – a better sense of taste and smell
- **more time** – it takes about ten minutes to smoke a cigarette, so a ten-a-day smoker can save nearly two hours a day when they quit. Over the course of a year, that's 20 days of lost time!
- **safer** – a reduced risk of developing life threatening diseases.

To find out more about the benefits of stopping smoking for employees, visit [bhf.org.uk/smokingatwork](http://bhf.org.uk/smokingatwork)

What does smoking at work  
cost UK businesses?

# £8.7bn

Total annual cost for smokers'  
sick leave and smoking breaks

# £1,815

Cost of a full-time  
employee's smoking  
breaks over a year

# 0.7 days per year

The additional  
time an average  
smoker takes  
in sick leave than  
their non-smoking  
colleagues



# 3 YOUR SMOKEFREE WORKPLACE

## Smokefree law

It is now against the law to smoke in virtually all enclosed public places and workplaces in the United Kingdom, including public transport and work vehicles. This is good news – it means a healthier environment where everyone can socialise, relax, travel, shop and work free from second-hand smoke.

### **Employers, managers and those in charge of smokefree premises and vehicles need to:**

- display 'no-smoking' signs in smokefree premises and vehicles
- take reasonable steps to ensure that staff, customers and visitors are aware that premises and vehicles are legally required to be smokefree
- remove any existing indoor smoking rooms
- ensure that no one smokes in smokefree premises or vehicles.

### **You may also want to take supportive measures:**

- develop a smoking policy
- provide staff with support to stop smoking, see section 4.

## Smoking policy

Whenever people are exposed to second-hand smoke, also known as passive smoking, it increases the risk of lung cancer, heart disease and other illnesses. So to protect all your employees and comply with legislation, you need to develop a comprehensive smokefree policy.

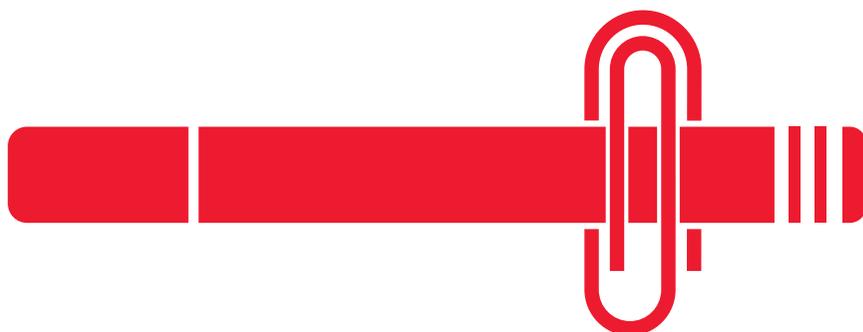
### **A good policy will address wider issues than simply what has to be done by law. It should:**

- provide a clear, written statement that everyone can refer to, setting up a consistent approach across the workplace
- give managers and anyone in a position of responsibility a clear idea of what's expected from them
- explain the support available for anyone trying to stop smoking, and reassure smokers who are trying to quit that the real health and organisational benefits will be noticed and appreciated.

When you're drawing up your policy, it's a good idea to involve employees and seek their input. Once the policy is complete, make sure everyone is aware of it and explain clearly what will be happening differently as a result. The main thing is to let smokers know what support is available to help them succeed.

**For more detailed information about the legislation, how you can make sure your workplace is doing what it should, and sample policy templates visit:**

- England – [smokefreeengland.co.uk](http://smokefreeengland.co.uk)
- Wales – [smokingbanwales.co.uk](http://smokingbanwales.co.uk)
- Scotland – [clearingtheairscotland.com](http://clearingtheairscotland.com)
- Northern Ireland – [spacetobreathe.org.uk](http://spacetobreathe.org.uk)



## 4 HELPING STAFF STOP SMOKING

**Did you know that smokers are up to four times more likely to quit smoking successfully if they go to their local NHS Stop Smoking Service and use stop smoking medicines, instead of going on willpower alone?**

### **NHS Stop Smoking Services**

**Getting the right support makes a difference.** You can speak to a local NHS Stop Smoking Service about what support is available for employees during and outside work hours. These services offer free counselling and support to anyone who wants to quit smoking.

Let your employees know how to contact their local NHS Stop Smoking Service for information, advice and support. You can encourage them even more by allowing them to attend local stop smoking services during work time without loss of pay.

Any practical support provided either on or near the workplace is likely to encourage more people to attend and makes it easier for employers to release staff. As long as there is sufficient demand and capacity, your local NHS Stop Smoking Service can run group or drop-in sessions at your workplace.

You could join forces with other local businesses to see if there is an opportunity to share the provision of stop smoking support sessions.

Alternatively, you could consider training your own staff to deliver stop smoking support in the workplace to help employees in their attempt to quit. This often works best with employees who have already used a local stop smoking service to stop smoking.

## National stop smoking websites and helplines

### England

[smokefree.nhs.uk](http://smokefree.nhs.uk)  
0800 022 4 332

### Northern Ireland

[want2stop.info](http://want2stop.info)  
0808 812 8008

### Scotland

[canstopsmoking.com](http://canstopsmoking.com)  
0800 84 84 84

### Wales

[stopsmokingwales.com](http://stopsmokingwales.com)  
0800 085 2219

### No Smoking Day

[nosmokingday.org.uk](http://nosmokingday.org.uk)  
Run by the British Heart Foundation, this website provides information and support for quitters, and hosts a community for like-minded people who have decided to stop smoking.

We are committed to helping people give up and have lots of resources on stopping smoking on the BHF website [bhf.org.uk](http://bhf.org.uk)

## Stop smoking medicines

There are many different ways to stop smoking. Some people try to cut down gradually before they stop, while other people stop immediately. Some people use medication, others use nicotine replacement therapy, and others rely solely on willpower.

There is no right or wrong way. Research from NHS smoking cessation services shows that smokers are four times more likely to quit successfully if they seek help from them. There are two medicines, Bupropion and Varenicline, that do not contain nicotine and which have been licensed to help people stop smoking. So it's worth helping employees understand their options.

To find out which treatment or medication is best for them employees can speak to a healthcare professional.

## Diet and physical activity

Many people who want to stop smoking are worried about the possibility of putting on weight. It's worth emphasising that, compared with the risk of continuing to smoke, gaining weight is a minor health risk – so it should never be a reason not to give up smoking.

People find food tastes better after they quit, or they replace cigarettes with snacks and sweets. To avoid putting on weight after stopping smoking, it's best to keep to a healthy diet and be as active as possible. Physical activity can help reduce nicotine cravings<sup>4</sup> and can reduce stress and low moods, as well as improve fitness.

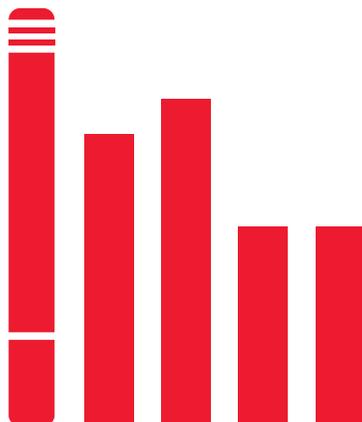
You can help employees who are trying to quit smoking by providing information and opportunities on healthy eating and physical activity. For information and ideas see booklets 2 and 3 in the Health at Work toolkit.

## Supporting staff in their first few weeks of stopping smoking

When smokers stop using tobacco, it's likely they will experience some strong physical, emotional and psychological changes. These are different for each person, but they are positive signals that the body is starting to repair itself and that the recovery process has begun.

Many smokers experience challenges when trying to quit. One of the main reasons why stopping smoking is difficult is because the body craves the nicotine it used to get from cigarettes.

To help support employees quit smoking, download our factsheet on the benefits of stopping smoking from [bhf.org.uk/healthatwork](http://bhf.org.uk/healthatwork)



## A healthier HITEK

*Three years ago, a quarter of people working at electronic materials specialist HITEK Ltd were smokers. The turning point came when a single employee decided to send everyone clear information on the benefits of quitting. The whole organisation decided to gear up for No Smoking Day and colleagues promised to help each other stop smoking.*

*The results have been amazing and No Smoking Day has become an annual focal point. New staff, who were smokers when they joined, have managed to quit thanks to professional support, stop smoking medicines and incentives offered by the company. Now there is just one smoker left. Little wonder HITEK has achieved the NHS North Lincolnshire Healthy Workplace silver award.*

**Don't forget to work with your staff to find out if there is extra information and support you can offer in the workplace.**

## Offering support and encouragement

As well as providing access to information, it's also important to offer positive support. Almost two-thirds (63%) of smokers say they want to stop smoking<sup>5</sup>, so a little encouragement makes a big difference. One effective approach is to organise a No Smoking Day event or display.

### No Smoking Day

No Smoking Day is a fantastic opportunity for workplaces across the UK to encourage employees to quit smoking. The campaign has helped hundreds of thousands of smokers to stop smoking and begin a new healthier lifestyle. It's become a big part of the calendar for lots of people – many health professionals and employers put a lot of planning into creating displays and events. For more information visit [nosmokingday.org.uk](https://nosmokingday.org.uk)

**You don't have to wait to organise your own No Smoking Day event. Here are our top tips to get you started:**

- **Management support** – make sure you get management support and commitment for your event from the beginning
- **Build a support team** – don't be afraid to ask for volunteers from different departments or local partners – for example, your local stop smoking service. Ex-smokers would be great to have on-board too. Create an action plan and meet regularly to check everything is on track.
- **Event format** – a display stand, a week of events, a competition with prizes? For more ideas on what you can do, see page 16.
- **Resources** – think about what you need to organise a great event including props, freebies and visual aids. The No Smoking Day site is a one-stop shop of resources that are just perfect for quitters, visit [nosmokingday.org.uk](http://nosmokingday.org.uk). Local health improvement teams are also a good source of support and offer free resources.
- **Promotion** – to get employees to turn up at your events, you need to tell them about it! Get help from your communications department and support team to spread the word. Use as many communication channels as possible in your workplace – emails, the intranet, posters, notes attached to pay slips, word of mouth, team meetings, and posters on the back of toilet doors or at the tea point or canteen.
- **Fundraising** – help the BHF fight for every heartbeat by raising money for our life saving research at your event, contact your local BHF representative and get ideas and support.
- **Final checks** – try to get as much set up as possible the day before the event.
- **Photos and feedback** – on the day, keep a track of the number of leaflets taken, number of people attending, collect quotes and take pictures... and most of all have fun!
- **Celebrate** – summarise the information you collected and make a case study to go on your intranet or elsewhere showing the success of the event and the number of employees who attempted to quit. Remember to feedback to management on your successes. Tell the BHF about your event so more workplaces can share your ideas and successes, email us at [healthatwork@bhf.org.uk](mailto:healthatwork@bhf.org.uk)

People who stop smoking for 28 days are five times more likely to stay smokefree<sup>6</sup>. The Stoptober campaign runs throughout the month of October every year and provides smokers with support and encouragement to help them stop smoking. For more information visit [smokefree.nhs.uk/stoptober](https://www.smokefree.nhs.uk/stoptober)

Your No Smoking Day event can also make a great story in your local media – a good way to boost your company profile and encourage smokers to take part.

## Helping hearts in Hartlepool

*In 2010 Hartlepool Stop Smoking Service had the highest smoking quit rate, over a four-week period, in England. But among staff at the Council, smoking was still common. No Smoking Day 2011 was the perfect opportunity to start practicing what they preach.*

*On the big day employees faced a big 'no tobacco' display as they entered the building. The day's activities included a quiz on smoking-related songs and musicians to create a positive and supportive atmosphere. Staff really enjoyed the event and the Council achieved the North East Better Health at Work silver award.*

*The following year, the council decided to share its successful approach by hosting two briefing sessions for partner workplaces and community services in the run-up to No Smoking Day. It was a chance for the partner organisations to:*

- find relevant resources to share with their staff*
- share ideas about the campaign theme*
- share best practice as to how to raise awareness.*

*Their excellent preparations and imaginative activities on the day resulted in the North East Better Health at Work Gold Award at the end of the year.*

## Event ideas

**There are lots of ways to raise awareness about smoking and how quit at your No Smoking Day event. Here are some ideas for you to consider:**

### Provide information

Ask your local NHS Stop Smoking Service, for flyers, leaflets and brochures. The NHS Choices and campaigns such as Change4Life have useful websites and printed materials. We've got lots of resources on quitting smoking on the BHF website too – [bhf.org.uk](http://bhf.org.uk)

You can share information in all kinds of ways, depending on your workplace. Remember to keep a record of the number of leaflets handed out so that you can estimate the effectiveness of your approach.

- If you have a large number of employees across several sites, send an email out to all employees with useful information, links and contact details to find out more about stopping smoking.
- Take advantage of any company websites or intranet sites to provide information.

- In the morning or after work, stand outside the building or in the reception area and hand out leaflets.
- Put a flyer on each workstation with some basic information and signpost where to find out more.
- Leaflet stands are always useful – make sure they're well displayed and easy to access.

### Set up a stand or display

If you're setting up a display with posters and leaflets, pick the location carefully and choose places where lots of people pass by – maybe the foyer, entrance or canteen. Make it colourful and eye catching and have one main message that is clear throughout the display. Don't clutter your display – remember less is more!

You can download editable posters at [bhf.org.uk/healthatwork](http://bhf.org.uk/healthatwork). For more resources visit the No Smoking Day website [nosmokingday.org.uk](http://nosmokingday.org.uk).

Depending on your budget, you could buy a few interactive resources to go on your display, such as the 'tar jar' and 'Big Cig' costume from [gasp.org.uk](http://gasp.org.uk).

## **Be creative**

As well as having a stand or display, you could add an extra twist. Take a look at the ideas below and get creative...

- dress up in the Big Cig costume
- display tar jars and lungs
- do 'smokerlyzer' tests using a carbon monoxide monitor
- use posters or tools displaying the chemicals in a cigarette
- arrange for local health professionals to give a talk or host group support sessions
- run a Quit quiz
- organise a Stop smoking team challenge.

## **Quit quiz**

Use the Quit quiz to raise awareness about smoking – not just for smokers, but for everyone. Think of fun and interactive ways to run your quiz.

For example, you could do it as an orienteering activity, in pairs or small groups, or as a social activity as part of your No Smoking Day event.

To download the Quit quiz visit [bhf.org.uk/healthatwork](http://bhf.org.uk/healthatwork)

## **We quit at work team challenge**

The We quit at work team challenge is all about employees working together to quit. You can run it at any time of the year. Start by encouraging smokers to sign the I quit contract.

Why not get a senior manager or director to sign it too? You can find the challenge, posters and contract at [bhf.org.uk/healthatwork](http://bhf.org.uk/healthatwork)

## 5 SUPPORT AND RESOURCES

**As well as all the information in this booklet, there's plenty of other support out there. It's all free and designed especially for you, so make sure you take advantage of it.**

### Health at Work website

You'll find all sorts of up-to-date information on running your Health at Work programme on our website [bhf.org.uk/healthatwork](http://bhf.org.uk/healthatwork), as well as a range of resources to download. Many of our publications are available to order online.

### Success stories

Our site includes some brilliant success stories from other organisations – the perfect way to get ideas and inspiration. You can use the search engine to find a case study similar to your own organisation and health initiatives. Some stories are in written form, while others are in the form of short films. Either way, it's a really useful source of information. Visit [bhf.org.uk/successstories](http://bhf.org.uk/successstories)

### BHF LinkedIn group

Our Health at Work LinkedIn community is for anyone interested in Health at Work. You can discuss challenges, news stories and share experiences with other members. You'll find information about forthcoming events, as well as useful documents. To join, search BHF Health at Work on LinkedIn.

### Health at Work training and events

The Health at Work website also includes information on our own Health at Work training and events, along with news, updates and a BHF events calendar. To see for yourself, visit [bhf.org.uk/healthatwork](http://bhf.org.uk/healthatwork)

**BHF Health at Work 020 7554 0355**

Whenever you're facing a particular challenge in your Health at Work programme, it's good to know there's someone on the other end of the line.

Call our Health at Work experts to share what's on your mind. They'll be able to give advice and point you to useful resources.

## Stop smoking resources

Visit our Health at Work website [bhf.org.uk/smokingatwork](http://bhf.org.uk/smokingatwork) for a wide range of resources to convince people of the benefits of stopping smoking, stop smoking quiz and team challenge and lots more information to help you support employees.

## Useful links

For information about Smokefree workplaces and how you can make sure your workplace is doing what it should, visit:

- England – [smokefreeengland.co.uk](http://smokefreeengland.co.uk)
- Wales – [smokingbanwales.co.uk](http://smokingbanwales.co.uk)
- Scotland – [clearingtheairscotland.com](http://clearingtheairscotland.com)
- Northern Ireland – [spacetobreathe.org.uk](http://spacetobreathe.org.uk)

## National stop smoking websites and helplines:

### England

[smokefree.nhs.uk](http://smokefree.nhs.uk)  
0800 022 4 332

### Northern Ireland

[want2stop.info](http://want2stop.info)  
0808 812 8008

### Scotland

[canstopsmoking.com](http://canstopsmoking.com)  
0800 84 84 84

### Wales

[stopsmokingwales.com](http://stopsmokingwales.com)  
0800 085 2219

## No Smoking Day

[nosmokingday.org.uk](http://nosmokingday.org.uk)

## ASH Action on Smoking and Health

[ash.org.uk](http://ash.org.uk)

## BHF resources

- Stop smoking booklet
- Time to quit

To order or download your copies, visit [bhf.org.uk/publications](http://bhf.org.uk/publications). Or call the BHF Orderline on 0870 600 6566 or email [orderline@bhf.org.uk](mailto:orderline@bhf.org.uk). Our publications are free of charge, but we would welcome a donation to support our fight for every heartbeat.

## References

- <sup>1</sup> BHF estimates based on HSCIC, Statistics on Smoking, 2015
- <sup>2</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>3</sup> BHF UK estimate based on ASH Ready Reckoner, ASH and LeLan Solutions, 2014
- <sup>4</sup> Taylor, AH, Ussher, MH & Faulkner G. (2007) The acute effects of exercise on cigarette cravings, withdrawal symptoms, affect and smoking behaviour: a systematic review. *Addiction*. Apr;102(4):534-43
- <sup>5</sup> GB General Lifestyle Survey 2011
- <sup>6</sup> West, R. & Stapleton, J. (2008) Clinical and public health significance of treatments to aid smoking cessation. *European Respiratory Review*. 17;110:199-204



**British Heart  
Foundation**

For over 50 years we've pioneered research that has transformed the lives of millions of people living with heart disease. Our work has been central to the discoveries of vital treatments that are changing the fight against heart disease.

But heart and circulatory disease still kills around one in four people in the UK, stealing them away from their families and loved ones.

From babies born with life threatening heart problems, to the many mums, dads and grandparents who survive a heart attack and endure the daily battles of heart failure.

Join our fight for every heartbeat in the UK. Every pound raised, minute of your time and donation to our shops will help make a difference to people's lives.

**Text FIGHT to 70080 to donate £3\***

**FIGHT  
FOR EVERY  
HEARTBEAT**

[bhf.org.uk](http://bhf.org.uk)

\*This is a charity donation service for the BHF. Texts cost £3 + 1 standard rate msg.

The BHF will receive 100% of your donation to fund our life saving research.

To opt out of calls and SMS text NOCOMMS BHF to 70060, or if you have any questions about your gift call 02032827863.

© British Heart Foundation 2015, a registered charity in England and Wales (225971) and Scotland (SC039426)

G692/1115