

BREATHE EASY: LIFT THE SMOKE SCREEN FROM YOUR LUNGS

APRIL BENNIE

Age: 39, 35-a-day habit



MUM-OF-TWO April Bennie vowed to stop smoking after she suffered a heart attack when she was just 36. Three years later, she's still puffing on 35 fags a day. But she's desperate to give up her habit... so that she'll live long enough to see her children grow up.

April, 39, from Paisley, Renfrewshire, also suffers from Addison's disease, asthma and coeliac. She said: "After my heart attack, I vowed to give up smoking for the sake of my children but, after several unsuccessful attempts, I felt like a complete failure."

April is to have laser treatment at the Anne Penman Laser Therapy clinic in Glasgow. The treatment involves the application of a laser beam to energy points on the hands, nose and wrists. It is similar to acupuncture.

The stimulation releases endorphins into the system. This gives the client a feeling of euphoria, which helps to reduce the withdrawal symptoms.

DAY ONE

Before I arrive for treatment, I have what is, hopefully, going to be my last cigarette.

Staff at the therapy centre are encouraging and the treatment isn't painful at all.

The laser light is put in my ear lobe, nose and on different parts of my wrist as well as my thumbs.

Feel a bit strange when I come out. I don't want to risk eating lunch in case I might smoke afterwards. Finally I do eat something and it doesn't bother me.

DAY TWO

Realise that my bed-linen smells of smoke, so I change the lot. I don't want a cigarette, but I'm in quite a bad mood. I feel as if I'm grieving for cigarettes.

DAY THREE

It's my birthday today but the only thing I'm looking forward to is my next visit to the clinic.

I have the therapy and I feel relaxed again. I notice that the whites of my eyes are changing colour. They're no longer a smoke-coloured yellow.

DAY FOUR

Didn't sleep very well. Had to get up to open all the windows because of the disgusting smell which is still lingering.

My sense of smell is getting sharper.

DAY FIVE

My son gave up smoking four weeks ago, but lit up today. It takes all my will-power not to join him.

Phone Anne at the therapy centre for some reassurance. She really helps.

DAY SIX

Feel a little frustrated because I know my brother and son are in the next room smoking. Phone Anne again for reassurance. She makes me believe I can beat this.

DAY SEVEN

This is the longest I have ever stopped smoking and I hope that's me over the worst of it. I really believe that I won't have another cigarette again.

● The Anne Penman Laser Therapy clinic can be contacted on: 0141-423 9375.

HUGH MCLEAN

Age: 40, 20-a-day habit



Determined Hugh McLean wants to give up smoking before it affects his health. The 40-year-old railway technician has smoked 20 Dorchesters a day for 24 years.

He said: "I haven't had any health scares yet, but I want to quit while I'm ahead."

Hugh took up our offer of acupuncture treatment and we sent him along to The Whole Works in Edinburgh, where a session usually costs £30.

Director Rob Ritchie, a trained acupuncturist, placed tiny needles in Hugh's ear. They stay in for three weeks, stimulating the body's endorphins.

DAY ONE

Have my last ciggie before the treatment, which is totally painless and relaxing.

DAY TWO

I have trouble sleeping at night, thinking about cigarettes.

DAY THREE

Tempted to have a fag, but I don't. I buy some herbal sleeping tablets.

DAY FOUR

I give in to temptation and have a cigarette when I see my wife smoking. Feel guilty.

DAY FIVE

Back on my no-smoking plan.

DAY SIX

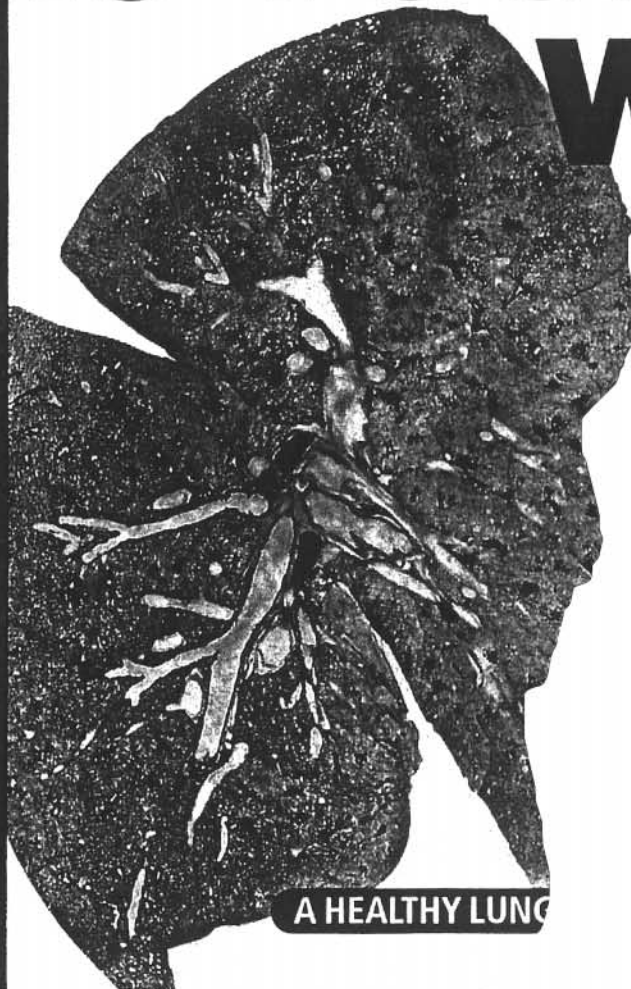
Getting through two packets of chewing gum a day. I'm determined not to relapse.

DAY SEVEN

My wife Catherine had left her cigarettes on the table so I smoked one. I didn't need it and felt guilty all day.

● The Whole Works can be contacted on 0131 225 8092.

IS YOUR LUNG



A HEALTHY LUNG

DON'T kid yourself... smoking is a killer. Yes, your old Grandad may have smoked 100 a day and was still playing football when he was 96 – but he's the exception, not the rule.

Many smokers refuse to believe that tobacco is the single largest cause of death and disease in the country. Others simply ignore it. But this isn't just propaganda – it has all been proven.

So when you've got a fag in your mouth and the lighter is flaming, give these facts a thought.

● YOU love your partner and your children, yet you're making sure you're going to die early and deprive them of a few more years with you. According to the Health Education Authority, smokers lose MORE THAN ONE DAY of their lives every week. You might not even get to meet your grandchildren.

● OUT of every thousand people who start smoking when they are teenagers and continue to have 20 cigarettes or more a day, about 250 will be killed before their time by smoking.

● AN estimated 120,000 deaths in Britain are attributable to smoking every year – that's 19 per cent of all deaths.

● AT least 375,000 Scots have stopped smoking in the last 10 years. And a staggering 10 million people in Britain have quit since 1983. That's 1000 every day.

During the Nineties, it is estimated that smoking will have killed up to 21 million people in developed countries. But you needn't be one of them.

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