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COLD TURKEY CODEINE RECOVERY PLAN

A practical support guide for getting through the first difficult days

FEARO

RECOVERY. STRENGTH. PURPOSE.

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NOT MEDICAL ADVICE

Always speak with your doctor before starting any reduction or cold turkey plan, especially if you have been taking high amounts, using for a long time, mixing substances, or dealing with health issues.

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BEFORE YOU START

Cold turkey can work for some people but it can also be intense physically and mentally. If someone has been taking very high amounts of codeine, using for a long time, mixing substances, or has underlying health issues, it is important they speak with a doctor before stopping suddenly.

This plan is not medical advice. It is a practical support guide based around getting through the first few difficult days safely and giving yourself the best chance of staying off codeine.

If you feel unsafe, confused, severely unwell, at risk of harming yourself, or you have symptoms that worry you, seek urgent medical help. Do not try to push through dangerous symptoms alone.

WHAT TO EXPECT

Most people underestimate one thing.

The withdrawal is uncomfortable but it is temporary.

A lot of people relapse because they panic and convince themselves:

“I can’t handle this.”

“This is never ending.”

“I’ve broken myself.”

You have not broken yourself. Your body and brain are adjusting after relying on codeine for relief, routine, comfort, energy, numbness or escape. The first few days are usually the hardest.

SYMPTOMS CAN INCLUDE

- Anxiety
- Restlessness
- Sweating
- Flu symptoms
- Stomach issues
- No sleep
- Racing thoughts
- Irritability
- Low mood
- Cravings
- Feeling emotional or empty

This is normal withdrawal. Not weakness.

The aim is not to feel amazing straight away. The aim is to stay safe, stay supported and get through the day without going back to codeine.

THE COLD TURKEY SURVIVAL PLAN

Step 1: Prepare Properly Before Day 1

Do not wake up one morning and impulsively decide: "That's it. I'm done." That usually ends badly. Prepare first.

GET RID OF

- Hidden tablets
- Empty boxes
- "Emergency stash"
- Pharmacy reminders
- Trigger items

STOCK UP ON

- Water
- Electrolytes
- Easy food
- Protein yoghurts or shakes
- Soup
- Fruit
- Imodium if needed
- Pain relief safe for you
- Hot water bottle
- Comfortable clothes

Reduce pressure on yourself

This is not the week to expect peak productivity. If possible, reduce social obligations, keep your schedule light and avoid stressful situations early on.

DAY 1 TO 3

Your Only Job: Get Through The Day

Do not think: “Can I stay off codeine forever?” That thought overwhelms people. Think: “Can I get through today?” That is it. Hour by hour if needed.

Important reminders:

- Your brain will scream for relief
- Cravings come in waves
- Panic peaks and drops
- Feelings are temporary
- Most cravings pass if you do not act on them

WHAT HELPS DURING ACUTE WITHDRAWAL

Move your body

- Walking
- Stretching
- Showering
- Standing outside

Movement helps more than people realise.

Drink fluids constantly

Withdrawal can dehydrate people badly. Keep sipping water and use electrolytes if they are suitable for you.

Eat even if you do not feel like it

Low blood sugar can make withdrawal feel worse. Keep food simple and easy.

Hot showers help. A lot.

SLEEP AND THE MENTAL SIDE

Sleep may be terrible

Do not panic. People often relapse because they convince themselves: "If I take codeine tonight I'll sleep." That one night often restarts the cycle. Your sleep will come back.

A lot of people think withdrawal is only physical. It is not.

Codeine often becomes:

- A coping mechanism
- A routine
- A comfort
- A reward
- Emotional escape

So when it disappears people can suddenly feel:

- Empty
- Bored
- Lost
- Emotional
- Flat

That is normal too. You are not just removing tablets. You are rebuilding habits and learning how to cope without them. That takes time.

DAYS 4 TO 7

This is where many people relapse. Not because withdrawal gets worse. Because they start convincing themselves:

“I’m probably fine now.”

“One won’t hurt.”

“I deserve one after getting this far.”

That thinking is dangerous. Most people who relapse do not plan to fully relapse. They plan to “just take one.” Protect yourself from that mindset.

CRAVING EMERGENCY PLAN

When cravings hit:

DO NOT:

- Sit alone obsessing
- Romanticise the buzz
- Convince yourself this time will be different

DO:

- Delay 30 minutes
- Walk
- Message someone
- Eat something
- Drink water
- Distract your brain
- Read why you quit

Cravings lose power when you stop feeding them mentally.

IMPORTANT TRUTHS

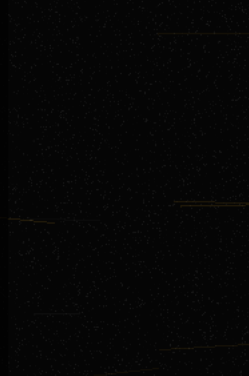
You are going to feel uncomfortable. That does not mean you are failing.

You are going to question yourself. That does not mean you should go back.

Your brain will try to bargain with you. That is addiction talking.

THINGS THAT USUALLY MAKE WITHDRAWAL WORSE

- Isolating yourself
- Doom scrolling
- Watching the clock constantly
- Caffeine overload
- Not eating
- No movement
- Keeping access to tablets
- Thinking too far ahead



WHAT PEOPLE OFTEN NOTICE AFTER THE FIRST WEEK

Not everyone feels amazing immediately. But many people notice:

- Clearer thinking
- Less guilt
- More stable emotions
- Better digestion
- More self respect
- Feeling present again
- Pride
- Even if energy and sleep still need time

FINAL MESSAGE

You do not need to feel perfect to stay off codeine.

You only need to keep going. Withdrawal convinces people the feeling is permanent. It is not.

The hardest part is often not the pain. It is believing you can actually live without codeine.

You can.

One day at a time.

Important: this guide is not medical advice. Speak with your doctor before starting any reduction or cold turkey plan. If you are worried about your symptoms or safety, seek medical help immediately.