

Christine's Story

It was June 2017 when Bracebridge resident Christine Rupert had her last cigarette, just a couple of months later she was feeling well enough to ride her bike -- something the 47-year-old hadn't done in years.



Christine was also finding that household chores that had caused her problems – carrying groceries, vacuuming stairs and playing with the kids – were no longer a big deal.

“I got it all back. I didn't realize how bad it was, how much the smoking was irritating my lungs until I stopped. No way I'd ever go back to cigarettes.”

Christine started smoking when she was a teen and says it wasn't long before she was smoking almost a pack a day. It was normal in her family because everybody at home smoked and even at school there was a smoking area. An athlete in high school she was able to both smoke and play sports until her late twenties. By then it caught up with her and her breathing made it too difficult.

Eventually Christine she was diagnosed with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) a lung disease that required her to use medication daily as well as a couple of inhalers each month to help her breathe.

Why did she decide to try to quit?

“I want to live longer, I couldn't breathe anymore” but admits, she never really thought she'd be able to quit.

“I liked it too much. It was a comfort.”

It took her a number of tries using many different supports including counselling patches, gum and eventually Champix. Her success came because she didn't stop trying.

She has not had a cigarette in more than six months and has weened herself off nicotine. She says she has vaped flavoured nicotine-free e-juice when the urge is too strong but says those too are almost gone now.

Looking back over the past six months she says she didn't realize how good the changes were going to be when she finally did quit and how quickly she would feel better.

“Your health will get better, you may not be 25 years old again but you will feel so much better.

“There are a million options and tools you can try. Keep trying them all until you try the one that works for you. There is a better life ahead.”

*If you need help to get started on your quit journey call Health Connection at 1-877-721-7520 Monday through Friday. Visit the **Tobacco-Free Chatter Facebook page** and hear from others in Simcoe Muskoka who have quit or are working to become tobacco free.*

