

# HOW LASER THERAPY HELPED PAUL TO BEAT THE WEED

By Lisa Adams

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**IT'S a battle even Barack Obama dreams of one day winning. After all, he made it to the White House as the first black president and scooped the Nobel Peace prize.**

But so far, he's failed to quit smoking. Pressure is on to kick the habit ahead of No Smoking Day on Wednesday, and the frightening statistics speak for themselves.

Hundreds die every year from smoking-related illnesses, making it one of Scotland's biggest killers.

So what does it really take to stub out that last cigarette and look forward to a bright, smoke-free future?

We challenged lifelong smoker Paul Livingstone, 43, to quit. After decades of addiction, the dad-of-three admits he'd tried everything from nicotine patches to self-help books to kick his 30-a-day habit.

Furious that five-a-side football was leaving him out of breath, salesman Paul signed up for laser therapy sessions and counselling at the Anne Penman clinic.

Now, 18 days on, he's still smoke-free and can't stop smiling. Here, he reveals his lifelong fight with cigarettes and why this time he's stubbed them out for good.

## THE TREATMENT

Salesman Paul started smoking when he was 15 and spends more than £50 a week on cigarettes.

He lives in Coatbridge with his wife Mary Jo, 43, and his children, Monica, 12, Dominic, nine, and Marie Clare, eight.

Paul says: "I went out on Saturday night for the first time in almost 30 years and didn't smoke. It was a brilliant feeling.

"I can taste and smell again. Breathing clearly is fantastic. Friends say my skin is fresher and my eyes are brighter. My wife, who has been on at me for years to stop smoking, can't believe it.

"It's never felt easy to stop smoking before. In the past when I've tried to stop, cigarettes were on my mind constantly. It felt like torture.

"I'm in the car a lot, driving to see clients and always worried about stinking of smoke. Smoking became a bind.

"I'd tried everything to stop - patches, micro tabs, inhalers, nasal sprays. You name it, I'd tried it.

"At every milestone, I'd kid myself I was going to stop. When my daughter Monica was born, I promised I'd stop. That slipped by and I decided I'd stop after my second kid was born.

"When I hit my 40th birthday, I was again determined to stop, but didn't. I was smoking up to 30 cigarettes a day and at the weekend, a whole lot more.

"I had my first laser therapy session on February 18. That date is embedded in my memory because I had my last cigarette at 5.55pm before I went in. I was petrified.

The therapist, Anne Penman, sat me down and asked me to be honest about



**NEW MAN:** Paul says the cash he used for cigarettes will now pay for a family holiday

# This time, I've quit for good

cigarette smoking. I told her I would have a cigarette and a coffee as soon as I got up. By 9am, I would have had at least five.

"Anne pointed out that everything about my day revolved around cigarettes. That had to change. I had my first laser therapy session. It wasn't painful. She used lasers around my ears, the back of my head and the bridge of my nose.

"She explained the lasers target certain points of the body to increase feel-good endorphin levels and block out the receptors in my brain which want nicotine.

"I haven't had a cigarette since leaving the clinic. Three days later, I had another session. It was like a top-up and I've also benefited from a third session. I know if I'm tempted to have a cigarette then I can have another session.

"It feels great and the money I save from quitting smoking will go on a family holiday in the sun."

## THE THERAPIST

Complementary therapist Anne Penman, who kicked her 60 fags a day habit after 19

years, claims laser therapy is a breakthrough for hundreds of Scots.

A soft laser is used to target specific energy points in the body to reduce cravings and stress, and restore balance.

The therapy side helps deal with the emotional, physical and psychological aspects of quitting, through discussing the role smoking has played in a person's life.

Anne says: "Our laser is safe, pain-free and drug free. It's similar to acupuncture. We use the light to stimulate energy points to help increase the endorphin level, calm the nervous system and help the body to become toxin-free quickly."

"Anyone can stop smoking. It's making the lifestyle change after you stop that can be difficult."

● The course costs £150 which includes all sessions and use of the helpline. Call Anne Penman Laser Therapy, Glasgow on 0141 423 9375 or log on to [www.annepenman.com](http://www.annepenman.com)



**LASER THERAPY:** Paul attends Anne Penman's clinic for treatment



**STUB IT OUT:** There is plenty of help and support out there to give up ciggies

## 10 TOP TIPS TO GIVE UP SMOKING

THE secret to successfully quitting smoking is down to perseverance, reveals experts from the No Smoking Day campaign. Here's a list of their top tips:

- 1 Set a date to stop - and stick to it. No Smoking Day is an ideal day to quit, with more than a million smokers across the UK all stopping that day too.
- 2 Write down all the reasons you want to stop smoking. Keep that list handy to use as a reminder if you are tempted.
- 3 Let friends and family know you're quitting and tell them what they can do to help.
- 4 Get advice from your GP or chemist.
- 5 Find others who would like to give up and support each other.
- 6 Get rid of lighters, ashtrays and matches, and make sure you don't have any ciggies around.
- 7 Take it one day at a time.
- 8 If someone offers you a cigarette, enjoy saying: "No thanks, I don't smoke."
- 9 Use the money on a treat instead.
- 10 Once you've stopped, stay stopped.

## ABERDEEN RESIDENTS TOP LIST OF NATION'S MOST SLEEP-DEPRIVED PEOPLE

**WE really are a nation of sleepy heads according to a survey - with Aberdeen being home to the UK's most sleep-deprived people.**

The Granite City's average resident sleeps for just five hours and 23 minutes per night - way below the recommended eight hours we are supposed to aim for.

The survey, commissioned by multimedia retailer QVC, quizzed more than 3000 people across

the UK about their sleeping patterns and top frustrations.

And it found the average Brit sleeps for only six hours and seven minutes per night with half of all those surveyed describing themselves as sleep deprived.

The study also found 64 per cent of people blame a lack of sleep for feeling irritable, 56 per cent reckon it leaves them unable to concentrate and 37 per cent admit lack of kip leaves them

craving sugary, fatty foods. And 29 per cent admitted to suffering from insomnia, while 87 per cent felt tired most of the week, with 17 per cent even dozing off at work.

Aberdeen and Worcester had the highest volume of residents claiming to regularly suffer from insomnia with 34 per cent and 31 per cent respectively.

Brits spend an average of 64 minutes per night tossing and turning, amounting to a lost seven

hours and 28 minutes of sleep a week - that's 16 days in a year.

The research reveals that money worries (48 per cent), problems at work (36 per cent), family troubles (33 per cent), and relationships issues (34 per cent) disturbed people's slumber.

And a partner's sleep habits can be the biggest cause of unrest, with 15 per cent admitting they have considered breaking up with their partner due to their annoying

bedtime behaviour. Snoring (54 per cent), hogging the duvet (32 per cent), fidgeting (29 per cent), taking over a side of the bed (24 per cent) and breaking wind (18 per cent) were the top irritations.

### TOP FIVE MOST SLEEP DEPRIVED CITIES

1. Aberdeen
2. Chelmsford
3. Belfast
4. Birmingham
5. Gloucester