

# SMOKING CESSATION

## TO YOUR HEALTH - PATIENT EDUCATION HANDOUT

# 1.3

### DESCRIPTION

Nicotine is an addictive drug. Tobacco dependence is a chronic condition affecting nearly 25% of adult Americans that often requires repeat quit attempts before a person is a successful quitter. More than 70% of all smokers have expressed a desire to stop smoking and if they successfully quit, the results are both immediate and long-term health improvements. Tobacco dependence interventions are both effective and cost-effective.

### FREQUENT SECONDARY SYMPTOMS

- Many secondary conditions are directly linked to tobacco use, some of which can be life-threatening. They include:
- Cancer (lung, throat, mouth)
- Cardiovascular disease
- Dental problems
- Financial hardships (from cost of smoking and treatment of major secondary conditions)

### RISK OF RELAPSE

- Most relapses occur within the first three months and may be compounded by:
- Alcohol consumption
- Social situations with other smokers
- Stressful situations

### EXPECTED OUTCOME

Outcomes vary by individual and treatment method. It may take more than one attempt to quit smoking.

### POSSIBLE REACTIONS

Smoking withdrawal may cause one or all of the following:  
Possible weight gain – usually <10 lbs; some medications help delay weight gain, difficulty in concentrating and mood shifts – irritability, bad moods and even depression.

### PREVENTIVE MEASURES

Seek supportive environments as well as the support of family, friends, and co-workers. Avoid situations and environments you normally associate with smoking.

### ACTIVITY & DIET

Change daily routines. Distract yourself from urges to smoke. Do something enjoyable every day, including things to relax and reduce stress, such as exercise, reading, or deep breathing. Get more rest/sleep. Maintain a normal diet. If you

feel the urge to have something in your hands and/or mouth, chew gum or select foods that are nutritious and low in calories. Drink a lot of water and other fluids; reduce caffeine consumption.

### GENERAL MEASURES

Effective treatments exist that can produce long-term and even permanent abstinence. In addition to counseling and behavioral therapies, numerous effective pharmacological therapies for smoking cessation now exist. Except in the presence of contraindications, these can be used with all patients who are attempting to quit.

### PRESCRIPTION

There are medications available by prescription, such as Chantix and Bupropion (Wellbutrin) which may be helpful with smoking cessation. Also available are over the counter nicotine replacement therapies. For additional medication information, check with your health care provider.

### OVER-THE-COUNTER

Nicotine gum satisfies a smoker's oral fixations. You should follow the directions on the package. Temporary side effects include sore jaws, hiccups, or upset stomach. Nicotine Patch delivers nicotine -minus the toxic chemicals found in cigarettes-directly through the skin and into the bloodstream. Nicotine patches come in various strengths, from full dose (15-22 milligrams of nicotine) to low dose (five to 14 milligrams). The patch works best if placed between neck and waist. Vary placement within this area to prevent skin rashes or irritation. Do not place patch over heart. Side effects include nausea, headaches or insomnia.

### COUNSELING AND BEHAVIORAL THERAPIES

Smoking cessation programs offer support and can increase your odds of success. They can also help you identify the triggers that facilitate your smoking and teach you ways to replace bad habits with healthier acts. Before you try any antismoking treatment, consult your doctor. Among the nicotine replacement treatments outlined above, special precautions apply to pregnant women, nursing mothers and individuals with serious heart conditions.

### ALTERNATIVE THERAPIES

Despite the lack of scientific evidence, many people claim that acupuncture and hypnosis helps in the effort to quit smoking.

## Student Health Center



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This information is for educational purposes only. Consult your doctor for specific medical advice, diagnosis and treatment.

## 618-453-3311

Dial-A-Nurse is available after-hours until 10:30 p.m. during fall and spring semesters. In case of emergency dial 911.