

Session 9: Smoking Cessation



Smoking damages the heart and blood vessels very quickly. However, the damage is repaired quickly for most smokers who stop smoking. Even long-time smokers can see rapid health improvements when they quit. Within a year, heart attack risk drops dramatically. Within five years, most smokers cut their risk of stroke to nearly that of a nonsmoker. Even a few cigarettes now and then damage the heart, so the only proven strategy to keep your heart safe from the effects of smoking is to quit. Most people find a combination of resources works best. Many smokers don't quit on their first attempt. Many need several tries to quit successfully. The benefits are well worth it! Just keep trying!

*Adapted from Smoking and Cardiovascular Disease, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Office on Smoking and Health, 2017

It's a common belief that smoking is a habit or lifestyle choice. But the truth is that it's an addiction, and one that can be very strong. Nicotine addiction changes brain chemistry over time, which is why quitting is so challenging.

When trying to quit, the most important thing is to keep trying, even if you give in to a craving. Just like you manage your overall health, take quitting one day at a time. Quitting smoking is one of the most important things you can do to help prevent or delay health complications. Fortunately, you have options when it comes to finding the best quit method for you.

It's never too late to quit! No matter how old you are, quitting smoking improves your health. If you quit, you're likely to add years to your life, breathe easier, and save money.

*Adapted from Smoke Free Ontario, 2017

What Happens When I Quit Smoking?

Within 20 Minutes of Last Cigarette

Blood pressure drops to normal
Heart Rate drops to normal
Body temperature of hands and feet increase to normal

8 Hours of Quitting

Carbon monoxide levels in blood drop to normal
Oxygen levels in blood increase to normal

Within 24 hours of Quitting

Chance of heart attack decreases

Within 48 hours of Quitting

Nerve endings start growing back
Ability to smell and taste things enhances
Digestion becomes more normal

Within 72 hours of Quitting

Breathing becomes easier
Climbing stairs become easier – you'll feel more energetic!

2 Weeks to 3 Months After Quitting

Circulation improves
Walking becomes easier
Lung function improves up to 30%

1 Month to 9 Months After Quitting

Coughing, sinus congestion, fatigue and shortness of breath decrease
Body's overall energy level increases

5 Years After Quitting

Lung cancer death rate for a pack-a-day smoker drops
from 137 to 72 out of 100,000 people

10 Years After Quitting

Lung cancer death rate drops to almost the rate of non-smokers
Risk of other cancers, such as mouth, bladder, kidney and pancreas, decrease

*Adapted from Calling It Quits, 2017

Tips on how to be successful when quitting smoking:

Before You Quit	During Quit Process	After You Quit
Tell your family, friends, or co-workers that you're quitting tobacco	Plan ahead for difficult situations. You want to give yourself the best chance of succeeding!	Finds ways to stay motivated to continue not smoking.
Tell your friends, family, or co-workers your quit-date so you can stay accountable!	Keep your mind and hands occupied	Continue with the effective tasks that help keep you occupied
Clean your house, car, and workplace in order to remove "reminders" of smoking	Find a support group	Continue with support group
Eat more fruit and vegetables	Visit non-smoking places	Continue with healthy lifestyle choices
Exercise, if your doctor allows it	Exercise, if your doctor allows it	Continue to exercise, if your doctor allows it
Reduce the amount of contact you have with tobacco users	Take a walk during your break or lunch time	Take a walk during your break or lunch time
Practice deep breathing	Wash dishes by hand after dinner	Find ways to keep your hands busy—a woodworking or knitting hobby may work!
Do what you can today to avoid stress later	Change driving routes, try not to go by the place where you'd normally purchase tobacco products	Continue with the new route, or find another one!
Make connections with ex-tobacco users	Practice stress reducers such as the 4D's: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delay • Deep Breath • Drink lots of water • Do something else 	Continue to practice stress reduction techniques that you've found helpful!
Review your self-help material	Set aside daily private time for prayer, meditation, or deep breathing	Continue with relaxation/meditation techniques that you've found helpful!
Consider using NRT to help you quit using tobacco	Cut down on caffeinated drinks	Celebrate successes! One hour, one day, one week, one month!
Identify your triggers for smoking (after meals, driving, boredom, drinking coffee, stressful situations, parties)	Get rid of tobacco products (lighters, papers, old cigarette packages)	Maybe purchase something (like new clothes or a vacation) with the money you've saved from not smoking!

*Adapted from Smoke Free Ontario, 2017

What are my NRT options?

Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRT) products are designed to help you manage your cravings and withdrawal symptoms. They supply your body with low doses of nicotine and deliver it more slowly than cigarettes. While you still experience cravings with NRT, they should occur less often and be less intense over time. NRT products come in several different formats and strengths. Ask your healthcare provider to find out which option might work best for you!



Nicotine Patch

A good option for smokers who want a constant level of nicotine over 24 hours.



Nicotine Gum

Replaces the oral fixation of smoking. Short acting and can be used anytime to handle cravings.



Nicotine Inhaler

A short acting replacement which mimics the physical movement of smoking.



Nicotine Lozenge

Similar to gum, short acting nicotine replacement. Provides an oral fix.



Nicotine Spray

One of the latest NRT options, provides fast relief from cravings.

Cardiac Health and Recreational Drugs



Most illegal drugs can have adverse cardiovascular effects, ranging from abnormal heart rate to heart attacks. Injecting illegal drugs also can lead to cardiovascular problems, such as collapsed veins and bacterial infections of the blood vessels and heart valves.

The following recreational drugs can also increase your risk of having a stroke:

- Amphetamines
- Cannabis or marijuana
- Cocaine
- Ecstasy
- Heroin or opiates
- Lysergic acid diethylamide (LSD)
- Phencyclidine (PCP)

The side effects and risks associated with use of these drugs include:

- Changes in body temperature, heart rate, and blood pressure
- Headaches, abdominal pain, and nausea
- Impaired judgment and greater risk of some sexually transmitted infections
- Heart attacks, seizures, and respiratory arrest

Cardiac Health and Alcohol



Drinking too much of any type of alcohol can increase your blood pressure and contribute to the development of heart disease and stroke.

If you drink alcohol, limit yourself to no more than:

- Three drinks a day most days, to a weekly maximum of 15 for men
- Two drinks a day most days, to a weekly maximum of 10 for women

A “drink” means:

- 341 mL / 12 oz (1 bottle) of regular strength beer (5% alcohol)
- 142 mL / 5 oz wine (12% alcohol)
- 43 mL / 1 1/2 oz spirits (40% alcohol)

Do not drink when:

- You’re driving a vehicle
- Taking medications or other drugs that interact with alcohol
- Pregnant or planning to be pregnant
- Making important decisions or are responsible for the safety of others
- Doing any kind of dangerous or high level physical activity
- Living with alcohol dependence or mental or physical health problems

If you’re concerned about how drinking may affect your health, talk to your doctor or pharmacist.

If you choose to drink, **Canada’s Low-Risk Alcohol Drinking Guidelines** (Appendix E) can help you decide when, where, why, and how to reduce your immediate and long-term alcohol-related harm. You should not adjust your drinking habits or begin to drink for health benefits without consulting your healthcare provider.

Session 9: What Have I Learned So Far?

1. What does NRT stand for?

2. What is one NRT option I have?

3. What are three positive things that will happen when I quit smoking?

4. When should I avoid alcohol?

Online Patient Resources

Smokers Helpline

www.smokershelpline.ca –or– 1-877-513-5333

The STOP Program

www.nicotinedependenceclinic.com/English/stop/Pages/Home.aspx

Health Canada

www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/smoking-tobacco.html

Tobacco Wise

www.tobacrowise.com

Smoke Free Ontario

www.ontario.ca/smokefree

QuitNow

www.quitnow.ca

Break It Off

www.breakitoff.ca (talk to your health care provider for more information)