

You can quit smoking – a guide to information, resources and support

Patient and Family Information Guide

A cancer diagnosis can be tough and stressful. If you use commercial tobacco, you might believe it's too late to cut back or quit, but it's never too late. Quitting or reducing tobacco use can boost your treatment, recovery and overall health.

What is commercial tobacco? What is traditional tobacco?

Commercial tobacco is produced by companies for recreational and habitual use in products such as cigarettes, e-cigarettes, cigars, pipe tobacco, chewing tobacco, snus, and snuff.

Traditional tobacco is a sacred medicine in Indigenous culture, used for healing and holding an important place in cultural and spiritual connections.

What are the benefits of quitting smoking?

Quitting smoking helps you to feel better

- ✓ Your heart rate and blood pressure will begin to improve within 20 minutes of your last cigarette
- ✓ Your heart will be healthier within 2 days of your last cigarette
- ✓ Your lung function will be better within 3 months of your last cigarette
- ✓ Your risk of heart disease will be cut in half within 20 minutes of your last cigarette

Quitting smoking helps your cancer treatment work well

- ✓ Radiation therapy works best when the amount of oxygen in your body is normal. When you smoke, your oxygen level drops, making it harder for radiation to do its job.
- ✓ Chemotherapy drugs work better in people who do not smoke. Cigarette smoke has chemicals that can lower the amount of some chemotherapy drugs in your blood, making them less effective.
- ✓ Quitting smoking, or reducing the number of cigarettes you smoke, can make surgery safer and help you recover faster.

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What are some of the ways to quit smoking?

Avoid tobacco by using the 4 Ds:

- Delay – Cravings often go away within 3 to 5 minutes, so try to wait it out
- Drink water – Instead of reaching for tobacco, reach for a glass of cold water
- Distract – Find something to keep your mind and hands busy
- Deep breathing – It can help you relax and push away the urge to smoke

Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRT):

NRT comes in many forms including patches, gum, lozenges, mouth spray and inhalers. Using NRT can double your chances of quitting by reducing nicotine cravings and withdrawal symptoms. Combining the nicotine patch with another NRT product (gum, lozenge, spray or inhaler) can raise your chance of quitting compared with using a single product. You can buy NRT at pharmacies and select stores. You do not need a prescription.

Prescription medications

Varenicline and Bupropion are prescription drugs that do not contain nicotine and are available to help reduce cravings and prevent relapse.

Other ways to quit smoking

- Slowly reduce the number of cigarettes you smoke each day, also known as ‘reduce to quit’
- Quitting without using any medication or support, also known as ‘cold turkey’.
- E-cigarettes or vaping might help if you find it hard to quit using the ways recommended on this page. Vaping products may be less harmful than smoking cigarettes, but the health risks are still unknown.
- Cytisine is a natural health product approved in Canada for smoking cessation. This product is available online and at some pharmacies.

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For more information, please visit www.cancercaresoutheast.ca

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What resources are available?

Quitting Smoking	
Resource Name	Topics
Cancer Centre of Southeastern Ontario Smoking Cessation Program 613-549-6666 extension 63136 Christine.khiyaza@kingstonhsc.ca	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact for more information
It's Never Too Late to Quit Smoking video https://tinyurl.com/y37ccg6o	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Benefits of quitting smoking • Mary's story
Quit Smoking: For People with Cancer online learning module https://elearning.ontariohealth.ca/login/index.php	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Benefits of quitting smoking • How to find support
Tobacco Wise https://tobacrowise.cancercareontario.ca/en	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indigenous quit smoking and vaping support • Indigenous Tobacco Program services and materials
You Can Quit Smoking video https://tinyurl.com/y37ccg6o	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cancer treatment and benefits of quitting smoking

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Cannabis and Cancer	
Website Name	Website Address
Ontario Health – Cancer Care Ontario	https://www.cancercareontario.ca/system/files_force/derivative/PCC_4159_Cannabis_Handout.pdf?download=1
Government of Ontario	ontario.ca/page/cannabis
Government of Canada	canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/drugs-medication/cannabis.html
Canada’s Lower-Risk Cannabis Use Guidelines	camh.ca/-/media/files/lrcug_professional-pdf
Vaping and Cancer	
Website Name	Website Address
Ontario Health – Cancer Care Ontario	https://www.cancercareontario.ca/system/files_force/derivative/PCC_4159_Vaping_Handout.pdf?download=1
Government of Canada	canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/smoking-tobacco/vaping.html
Government of Ontario	ontario.ca/page/where-you-cant-smoke-or-vape-ontario

References:

1. *Quit Smoking – The Benefits for People with Cancer* | **Smoking Cessation Program - Ontario Health-Cancer Care Ontario**: <https://www.cancercareontario.ca/en/Quitting-Smoking>
2. *Your Nicotine Addiction Treatment Plan* | **Ottawa Model for Smoking Cessation-University of Ottawa Heart Institute**: https://www.ottawaheart.ca/sites/default/files/legacy/uploads/documents/Patients-Visitors/clinics-and-programs/natp_en.pdf
3. *Be Tobacco-Wise* | **Aboriginal Tobacco Program -Ontario Health- Cancer Care Ontario**: <https://www.cancercareontario.ca/sites/ccocancercare/files/assets/TobaccoWiseBrochureFirstNations.pdf>
4. *You Can Quit – One Step at a Time* | **Canadian Cancer Society**: <https://cancer.ca/en/cancer-information/resources/publications/osaat-you-can-quit>

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