

Quit Smoking to Improve Mental Health

Smoking remains the single largest preventable cause of death and illness in the world. Quitting smoking improves physical health.

But it is also proven to boost your mental health and well-being. It can improve mood and help relieve stress, anxiety and depression.

Some groups smoke more heavily or at higher rates than other groups. Groups that smoke more, tend to be at higher risk for smoking-related cancer and other diseases. These populations tend to experience multiple barriers in their lives, including those at lower socioeconomic levels, those without college degrees, Native American/Indigenous communities, African American/Black communities, LGBTQIA+ communities, those who served in the military, those with behavioral health conditions, and others.



20 minutes 20 minutes after quitting, your heart rate and blood pressure drop

A few days The carbon monoxide level in your blood drops to normal a few days after quitting

1 to 3 months Circulation improves and lung function increases



Smoking & Mental Health

People living with serious mental illness, including anxiety, depression or schizophrenia:

- Are much more likely to smoke than the general population
- Tend to smoke more heavily (more deeply and more frequently) than the general population
- Life expectancy is 10 to 20 years shorter than those who don't experience mental health problems
- Some mood stabilizing medication might not work as intended because smoking interferes with these medicines

When people stop smoking, research shows:

- Anxiety, depression and stress levels are lower
- Quality of life and positive mood improve
- The dosage of some medicines used to treat mental health problems can be reduced



How Do You Ask About Smoking?



Try using Motivational Interviewing to get the conversation started:

- Provide information on the negative health effects of tobacco use and smoking
- Help people learn more about the consequences of smoking on physical and mental health
- Encourage people to express their feelings about smoking to better understand why they smoke
- Actively look for non-judgmental opportunities to bring up smoking, cutting back and even quitting

Discuss motivation to quit smoking for everyone.

- Have you given any thought recently to quitting smoking?
- What are some of your reasons for wanting to quit?
- What concerns you about continuing to smoke the way you do now?
- What do you think it will be like when you don't smoke anymore?



What is Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRT) and How do I get it?

Nicotine Replacement Therapy replaces the nicotine that you would get from a cigarette while you stop. It works by reducing cravings for cigarettes and reducing withdrawal symptoms such as feeling grumpy. NRT can increase your ability to quit smoking.

Sometimes NRT is a patch, gum, or lozenge. There are also medications available to help quit smoking such as Chantix and Bupropion. Your doctor or medical provider can help you get both medication and NRT.



Those who use NRT are twice as likely to be successful in quitting or cutting back.

There is Real Benefit in Quitting

The US Surgeon General has said, "Smoking cessation (stopping smoking) represents the single most important step that people who smoke can take to enhance the length and quality of their lives." Quitting is hard, but you can increase your chances of success with help. **The Illinois Tobacco Quitline is a free resource to help people quit smoking, vaping, or other tobacco use.**

**Se habla español
1-866-QUIT-YES
TTY 1-800-501-1068**

