

## Smoking Cessation

### Summary

1. Risks of Smoking
2. Benefits of Quitting
3. Seeking Help



### Risks of Smoking

Tobacco use is the leading cause of preventable death and disease in the United States, it causes more than 480,000 deaths each year. Smoking is shown to cause damage to almost all organs of your body including your brain, heart, and lungs. Individuals who smoke are more likely to develop heart disease, stroke, and lung cancer. Smoking can also lead to cancer in all different areas of your body, not just your lungs. This includes bladder, blood, pancreas, and stomach.

### Benefits of Quitting

Nicotine in cigarettes is considered to be an addictive drug which is why it is so difficult to stop. When you smoke your brain develops extra nicotine receptors however, once you cut yourself off from nicotine your brain will rewire itself it will just take some time! Some of the main long term benefits of quitting include

- Saving money
- Improving lung and heart function
- Decreasing cancer risk
- Healthier looking skin, hair, teeth

However there are also benefits you will see after just a short time after quitting!

- Minutes: Heart rate drops
- 24 hours: Nicotine levels in blood drop to 0
- Several Days: Carbon Monoxide levels in blood drop
- 1-12 months: coughing and shortness of breath decrease
- 1-2 years: risk of heart attack drops
- 3-6 years: added risk of coronary disease drops by half
- 5-10 years: risk of certain cancers drops by half, risk of stroke decreases

- 10 years: risk of lung cancer drops by half between 10-15 years
- 15 years: risk of coronary disease drops to almost that of a non smoker

You just need a place to start!

## Seeking Help

Every member of your healthcare team can support and motivate you in your journey to quit, this includes your physical therapist!

Ways to quit include

### 1. Behavioral counseling

A referral can be made for behavioral counseling or there are many other options

- State tobacco quitline (1-800-QUIT-NOW)
- Web support: [CDC.gov/quit](http://CDC.gov/quit); [smokefree.gov](http://smokefree.gov); [becomeanex.org](http://becomeanex.org)
- Text support: [smokefree.gov/smokefreeTXT](http://smokefree.gov/smokefreeTXT)
- App support: [smokefree.gov/tools-tips/apps/quitstart](http://smokefree.gov/tools-tips/apps/quitstart)

### 2. Medication: Talk to your doctor before attempting any medication changes

- Your doctor may recommend a nicotine replacement (NRT)

### 3. Combining behavioral counseling and medication

Withdrawal symptoms can occur when quitting smoking but there are coping strategies to manage these symptoms to keep you on track

- Anxiety and irritability
  - exercise/take a walk, contact a friend, deep breathing
- Insomnia
  - Avoid late night caffeine, set a sleeping schedule
- Restlessness
  - Exercise, focus on a hobby
- Hunger
  - Eat plenty of fruits and vegetables, avoid high calorie foods, drink more water

Start your journey by setting a quit date of 30 days. Monitor suspected triggers and why attempts have failed in the past. Set follow up visits to make yourself accountable.