

# TOBACCO

## Use and Cessation

Tobacco use is the leading cause of preventable deaths in the United States, killing more than 400,000 people each year. This total is more than the number of deaths caused by AIDS, alcohol, drug abuse, car crashes, murders, suicides, and fires combined, according to the Centers for Disease Control. The good news is that people can successfully break the smoking habit. All it takes is a firm decision to quit, along with some hard work, persistence and the right kind of support.

### **Health Risks of Using Tobacco**

A number of health and safety risks are associated with smoking, including:

- Increased risk of fire, injury, and automobile crashes
- Upper respiratory disease like colds, flu, sinus infections, bronchitis, and pneumonia
- Heart disease
- Lung cancer
- Lymphomas
- Emphysema
- Mouth and throat cancers
- Stroke

### **Why Quit?**

- Your chance of a heart attack decreases.
- Your ability to smell and taste is enhanced.
- Your lungs work better and breathing becomes easier.
- Your blood circulation improves.
- Your risk for lung cancer decreases.
- New healthy cells replace pre-cancerous cells.

### **How to Quit**

- Prepare for success. A positive mindset can help you follow through on your plans.
- Decide on a timeframe in which you will quit.
- Substitute one or two new, healthier habits to replace smoking. Nibble on fresh fruit or vegetables when the urge to smoke comes on. Go for a walk or jog when the urge gets too great.
- Try nicotine replacement therapy.
- Find a support group to help you get through the hard times.

***Tip: Be sure to exercise and eat a healthy diet so you don't gain weight during the quitting process.***

### **Quitting Smoking: How to Change**

Smoking is a behavior that is learned over a period of time. After a while it can become linked with other activities such as drinking coffee, talking on the phone, driving in the car, or eating a meal. These other activities become triggers, events that have tight connections to the urge to smoke. Changing these triggers can help you to manage to quit smoking. Three ways to manage smoking triggers include:

#### **Avoid the situation**

If you smoke with your coffee then don't drink coffee. Have juice or something different.

#### **Change the situation**

Sit in the nonsmoking section at the restaurant or café.

#### **Substitute for the cigarette**

Keep something in your free hand when you're on the phone; a pen, a small toy, a photo.

#### **Examples of other trigger breakers include:**

- Distract yourself from urges to smoke. Talk to someone, go for a walk, or get busy with a task.
- Change your routine. Use a different route to work. Drink tea instead of coffee. Eat breakfast in a different place.
- Do something to reduce your stress. Take a hot bath, exercise, or read a book.
- Plan something enjoyable to do every day
- Drink plenty of water and other fluids.



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## **Chewing Tobacco**

Smokeless tobacco, or chewing tobacco, contains more than 2,000 chemicals, many of which are directly linked to the following health problems:

- Gum disease
- Tooth loss
- Oral cancer
- Esophagus cancer
- Larynx cancer
- Tumors of the digestive tract

## **What You Can do About Chewing Tobacco**

- Educate yourself and others at risk about the dangers of using *any* form of tobacco.
- Understand that people who use chewing tobacco put themselves at risk for many serious health problems.
- Encourage youth not to give in to peer pressure to use smokeless tobacco or any other substance.
- Get the facts from the American Cancer Society and the National Cancer Institute. Both offer information and literature on chewing tobacco that you can use to educate yourself and share with others.

*Tip: If you decide to try a nicotine patch or pill to overcome your cravings, be sure you select the type and dosage appropriate for a smokeless tobacco user.*

## **Tobacco: Environmental Tobacco Smoke (ETS)**

You do not have to smoke to be at risk for the hazards caused by tobacco use. Environmental tobacco-smoke (ETS), or secondhand smoke, contains hundreds of dangerous substances that kill 60,000 Americans each year and cause cancer and other health problems.

## **What You Can Do About ETS**

- Do not smoke in your home or permit others to do so.
- Ask anyone who smokes to go outside
- If someone smokes in the house, open the windows or use an exhaust fan to increase ventilation.
- Keep children away from anyone who smokes.
- Support smoking bans in your community.
- If smoking is allowed at restaurants in your area, frequent those that do not allow it on their premises or at least ask to be seated in the no-smoking section.



## **Resources**

### **Connecticut Clearinghouse**

1-800-232-4424 [www.ctclearinghouse.org](http://www.ctclearinghouse.org)

### **Tobacco Free CT**

[www.tobaccofreect.org](http://www.tobaccofreect.org)

### **American Cancer Society**

1-800-ACS-2345 [www.cancer.org](http://www.cancer.org)

### **National Cancer Institute**

[www.cancer.gov](http://www.cancer.gov) 1-800-4-CANCER

### **American Lung Association**

1-800-LUNG USA [www.lungusa.org](http://www.lungusa.org)

### **CDC Office on Smoking, Tobacco and Health**

1-800-232-1311 [www.cdc.gov/tobacco](http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco)

### **Connecticut Quitline**

1-800-QUIT-NOW

1-800-784-8669

[www.quitnow.net/connecticut](http://www.quitnow.net/connecticut)

### **Information Provided by:**

**Massachusetts Dept. of Public Health  
Wellness at Work**