

Cardiac Rehab Handout - Smoking Cessation

- Smoking Cessation reduction in risk of Death: Aspirin is 15%
Beta Blockers is 23%
Ace Inhibitors is 23%
Statins is 29-35%
Stop Smoking is 36%
- Nicotine increases HR, Blood pressure, and Myocardial Work (mild compared to last 2 below)
- Carbon Monoxide binds to hemoglobin, causes relative hypoxemia, and red blood cell hypercoagulation
- Oxidant gases causes inflammation, endothelial dysfunction, oxidation of lipids, increases plasma fibrinogen

Techniques for stopping:

1. Try nicotine replacement therapy

Ask your doctor about nicotine replacement therapy. The options include:

- Prescription nicotine in a nasal spray or inhaler
- Over-the-counter nicotine patches, gum and lozenges
- Prescription non-nicotine stop-smoking medications such as bupropion (Zyban) and varenicline (Chantix)

Short-acting nicotine replacement therapies — such as nicotine gum, lozenges, nasal sprays or inhalers — can help you overcome intense cravings. These short-acting therapies are generally safe to use in combination with long-acting nicotine patches or one of the non-nicotine medications.

Electronic cigarettes have had a lot of attention recently as an alternative to smoking traditional cigarettes. However, more studies are needed to determine the effectiveness of electronic cigarettes for smoking cessation and the long-term safety of these devices.

2. Avoid triggers

Urges for tobacco are likely to be strongest in the situations where you smoked or chewed tobacco most often, such as at parties or bars, or while feeling stressed or sipping coffee. Identify your trigger situations and have a plan in place to avoid them entirely or get through them without using tobacco.

Don't set yourself up for a smoking relapse. If you usually smoked while you talked on the phone, for instance, keep a pen and paper nearby to occupy yourself with doodling rather than smoking.

3. Delay

If you feel like you're going to give in to your tobacco craving, tell yourself that you must first wait 10 more minutes — and then do something to distract yourself for that period of time. Try going to a public, smoke-free zone. These simple tricks may be enough to derail your tobacco craving.

4. Chew on it

Give your mouth something to do to fight a tobacco craving. Chew on sugarless gum or hard candy, or munch on raw carrots, celery, nuts or sunflower seeds — something crunchy and satisfying.

5. Don't have 'just one'

You might be tempted to have just one cigarette to satisfy a tobacco craving. But don't fool yourself into believing that you can stop there. More often than not, having just one leads to another— and you may end up using tobacco again.

6. Get physical

Physical activity can help distract you from tobacco cravings and reduce their intensity. Even short burst of physical activity — such as running up and down the stairs a few times — can make a tobacco craving go away. Get out for a walk or jog.

If you're stuck at home or the office, try squats, deep knee bends, pushups, running in place, or walking up and down a set of stairs. If physical activity doesn't interest you, try prayer, needlework, woodwork or journaling. Or do chores for distraction, such as vacuuming or filing paperwork.

7. Practice relaxation techniques

Smoking may have been your way to deal with stress. Resisting a tobacco craving can itself be stressful. Take the edge off stress by practicing relaxation techniques, such as deep-breathing exercises, muscle relaxation, yoga, visualization, massage or listening to calming music.

10. Remind yourself of the benefits

Write down or say out loud the reasons you want to stop smoking and resist tobacco cravings. These might include:

- Feeling better
- Getting healthier
- Sparing your loved ones from secondhand smoke
- Saving money

8. Call for reinforcements

Touch base with a family member, friend or support group member for help in your effort to resist a tobacco craving. Chat on the phone, go for a walk together, share a few laughs, or get together to commiserate about your cravings. A free telephone quit line — 800-QUIT-NOW (800-784-8669) — provides support and counseling

9. Go online for support

Join an online stop-smoking program. Or read a quitter's blog and post encouraging thoughts for someone else who might be struggling with tobacco cravings. Learn from how others have handled their tobacco cravings.