



Tobacco Prevention and Cessation

Domain Solutions

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The Importance of Tobacco Prevention and Cessation

Health Risks of Using Tobacco

Smoking tobacco affects a smoker's health in many ways, harming nearly every organ of the body and causing many diseases. In fact, smoking causes about one in five deaths in the United States and kills more than seven million people worldwide each year.⁽¹⁾ Here are a few examples of ways smoking tobacco damages a smoker's health.⁽²⁾⁽³⁾

- Increased risk of lung disease
- Increased risk of heart disease
- Increased risk for sexual problems
- Increased risk of fertility issues
- Increased risk of gum disease and tooth loss.
- Delayed wound healing
- Decreased immunity
- Increased risk of type 2 diabetes, rheumatoid arthritis, and peptic ulcers
- Decreased sense of smell and taste
- Premature aging of the skin
- Bad breath and stained teeth
- Increased risk for cataracts and macular degeneration
- Decreased bone density

Cigarette smoking also increases the risk of cancers of the:

- Oral cavity and pharynx
- Larynx
- Lung
- Esophagus
- Pancreas,
- Uterine cervix
- Kidney

- Bladder
- Stomach
- Colon and rectum
- Liver

In addition, smoking increases the risk of myeloid leukemia, and the US surgeon general concluded that smoking increases the risk of advanced-stage prostate cancer.⁽⁴⁾

Non-smokers can be at risk from the harmful effects of tobacco if they are around secondhand smoke. Secondhand smoke comes from the smoke that is exhaled by a smoker and smoke from the burning end of a cigarette, cigar, or pipe. Exposure increases the risk of lung diseases, including lung cancer, coronary artery disease, and heart attacks.^{(5) (6) (4)}

Health Risks of Using E-cigarettes

It's important to understand that the long-term health effects of e-cigarette use are not known. So far, research has found that e-cigarette use is likely to be significantly less harmful than smoking regular cigarettes.⁽⁷⁾ This is because e-cigarettes do not burn tobacco, which is a process that produces an estimated 7,000 chemicals, including at least 70 chemicals that cause cancer. However, most e-cigarettes contain nicotine - the same addictive drug that is in regular cigarettes, cigars, and other tobacco products. Additionally, other harmful or potentially harmful chemicals are often present in e-cigarette vapor. E-cigarettes are still fairly new and continue to evolve in the marketplace, and scientists are still working to understand the health effects of long-term use.^{(5) (6) (8)}

Benefits of Quitting

It's never too late to quit using tobacco. The sooner a smoker quits, the better their chances are of reducing their risk for heart disease, lung disease, cancer, and other illnesses.

Quitting smoking can be a potentially lifesaving choice, but it is not easy to do because of physical, emotional, and psychological dependencies. Tobacco addiction is a chronic disease that often requires repeated interventions and multiple attempts to quit. You can help your employees to learn about their options to quit and where they can go to get help. There is strong evidence that smoke-free policies decrease smoking among adults.

Evidence-Based Practice 1: Comprehensive Tobacco-Free Worksite Policy

Comprehensive tobacco-free worksite policies can help protect employees from the health effects of secondhand smoke and encourage tobacco users to make a quit plan. Survey research data from employees show that both smokers and non-smokers support such policies. Also, many state and local governments now require workplaces to be smoke-free (<http://www.no-smoke.org/goingsmokefree.php?id=519>).

Implementation Options

Review and revise existing tobacco policies. Current company policies should be reviewed periodically and revised as needed to ensure they follow best practices in tobacco control. A policy should be written and should:

- Apply to employees, visitors, and contractors.
- Cover all property that is owned or leased. This includes indoors, outdoors, and company-owned or leased vehicles. If the property is leased, multiple attempts should be made to negotiate with the owner to implement a 100% tobacco-free policy.
- Cover all forms of burned tobacco products, electronic nicotine delivery systems (e-cigarettes/vaping or novel/emerging tobacco products), hookahs, marijuana, and smokeless tobacco.

Tools and Resources*

Tools and resources for employers

- The *Comprehensive Tobacco-Free Worksite Policy* template provides employers a plan for implementing a new policy. <https://www.acs4ccc.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/Comprehensive-Tobacco-Free-Worksite-Policy-v31.pdf>

- The American Cancer Society position statement on electronic cigarettes
<https://www.cancer.org/healthy/stay-away-from-tobacco/e-cigarette-position-statement.html>
- For the latest smoke-free news, including the ability to search for news updates by state, visit the American Cancer Society *Cancer Action NetworkSM (ACS CAN) website*. (ACS CAN is the nonprofit, nonpartisan advocacy affiliate of the American Cancer Society.)
<https://www.fightcancer.org/what-we-do/smoke-free>
- The American Cancer Society public health statement on eliminating combustible tobacco use in the United States (CA: *A Cancer Journal for Clinicians*)
<https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.3322/caac.21455>
- Key issues surrounding the health impacts of electronic nicotine delivery systems (ENDS) and other sources of nicotine (CA: *A Cancer Journal for Clinicians*)⁽⁶⁾
<https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.3322/caac.21413>
- *How Do You Measure Up?*, an ACS CAN report that evaluates states in nine specific areas of public policy that can help fight cancer
<https://www.fightcancer.org/sites/default/files/National%20Documents/HDYMU-2019.pdf>
- *The Community Guide What Works Fact Sheet on Tobacco Use**
<https://www.thecommunityguide.org/sites/default/files/assets/What-Works-Factsheet-Tobacco.pdf>

* Inclusion on this list does not imply endorsement by the American Cancer Society.

Evidence-Based Practices 2, 3, & 4: Fully Covered Cessation Support

Treatment for tobacco dependence is considered a gold standard health practice. Evidence shows that tobacco quit rates are higher when health insurance covers tobacco cessation support.⁽⁹⁾ Employees use cessation services more often when they do not have to pay for treatments themselves.

Offering fully covered non-nicotine cessation medications and nicotine replacement therapies might require negotiation with your health plan. A comprehensive cessation program should include a variety of no-cost options so that tobacco users can choose what works best for their quit plan.

Quitline programs based on mobile phones can be more convenient for users, and apps and programs are available that have been proven to be effective.

Implementation Options

Fully cover access to non-nicotine medications. Negotiate with your insurance plan to provide employees with prescription non-nicotine cessation medications that are fully covered, with no out-of-pocket costs. This includes Zyban[®], also known as Bupropion SR, and Chantix[®], also known as Varenicline.

Fully cover access to nicotine replacement therapies. Ensure that over-the-counter nicotine replacement therapy is fully covered, with no out-of-pocket costs. This includes the nicotine patch, gum, lozenge, nasal spray, and oral inhaler.

Provide access to no-cost tobacco cessation counseling. Work with your insurance plan(s) to ensure group, individual, or telephone quitline counseling is available to employees with no

WHAT ABOUT “SKIN IN THE GAME?”

“Skin in the game” – or out-of-pocket costs – for cessation programs and medications dramatically reduces utilization of these programs and services, which decreases overall effectiveness of tobacco cessation practices.

out-of-pocket costs. This does NOT include “e-coaching” or any other internet-based approaches.

Tobacco cessation counseling should be comprehensive:

- Counseling, including proactive sessions (follow-up counseling calls initiated by a counselor)
- Cessation incentives for quit attempts using counseling or adherence to FDA-approved cessation medications
- At least four counseling sessions of at least 10 minutes each

Cities and states offer tobacco cessation programs that could be made available to your employees and their family members. Explore local group counseling and state quitline options.

Tools and Resources*

Tools and resources for employers

- Refer to the map provided by the *North American Quitline Consortium* at the link below to learn more about state-sponsored quitlines. You can learn if free cessation medications are available, about which populations are covered, hours of operation, and direct links to each state quitline’s website.*
<http://map.naquitline.org/>
- ACS CAN provides background information on tobacco cessation insurance coverage, as well as their recommendations.
<https://www.fightcancer.org/policy-resources/tobacco-cessation-insurance-coverage>
- ACS CAN provided background information on comprehensive tobacco cessation benefits, as well as their recommendations.
<https://www.fightcancer.org/policy-resources/tobacco-cessation-insurance-coverage>
- The US Preventive Services Task Force provides recommendations on tobacco smoking cessation.*

<https://www.uspreventiveservicestaskforce.org/Page/Document/UpdateSummaryFinal/tobacco-use-in-adults-and-pregnant-women-counseling-and-interventions1>

- *The Community Guide* What Works Fact Sheet on Tobacco Use*
<https://www.thecommunityguide.org/sites/default/files/assets/What-Works-Factsheet-Tobacco.pdf>

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AMERICAN CANCER SOCIETY DATABASE OF LOCAL CESSATION RESOURCES

The American Cancer Society offers an online database to search for local cessation resources. Follow these steps to find local resources in your area:

1. Click on the online database [search page](#).
2. Enter your ZIP code or city/state.
3. Under “Choose a Program”, start typing **cessation** and two options will pop up:
 - a. Smoking Cessation and Tobacco – Free or Reduced Cost Medications
 - b. Smoking Cessation and Tobacco – Programs and Services
4. If no resources are available in your area, check with your local health department.

Evidence-Based Practice 5: Worksite Tobacco Cessation Programming

Offering an on-site tobacco cessation group program can add an important tool to your company's comprehensive tobacco cessation program. Some tobacco users may prefer a small group that uses a face-to-face format. You can find low-cost group programs from various organizations across the country.

Implementation Options

Create a worksite cessation support group. Create an on-site tobacco cessation group for your employees to help support them in their efforts to quit.

Tools and Resources*

Tobacco users seeking help and/or information will be directed to the CDC's 1-800-QUIT-NOW hotline for guidance and program referrals. The CDC hotline is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Freshstart® Program

If your company/organization is looking for an on-site tobacco cessation solution, consider the American Cancer Society [Freshstart](#) program. It is a group-based tobacco cessation program that helps employees to plan a successful quit attempt by providing essential information, skills for coping with cravings, and social support. Studies show that increases in quit attempts can decrease tobacco prevalence rates.

READY TO IMPLEMENT THE FRESHSTART PROGRAM?

1. Go to the [Freshstart website](#).
2. Register online (scroll toward bottom of page).
3. Complete the online, self-study training.
4. Follow screen and audio prompts at the end of training to become certified. *Once you become certified, you have access to download/order the program materials.*
5. Offer the program to your employees.

Resources for Mobile Phone Programs*

In addition to the CDC 1-800-QUIT-NOW hotline, there are other cessation program options that offer support via interactive features and text messaging on mobile phones.

[Smokefree.gov](https://www.smokefree.gov) provides several options for those wanting to use a mobile option to help with their quit attempt. [Quit Guide, which was designed for adults](#), tracks cravings, moods, slips, and smoke-free progress. [quitSTART](#) uses the information entered into the app by smokers to provide tailored tips, inspiration, and challenges to help smokers quit. quitSTART was designed for teens, but adults can use it, too.

[Another smokefree.gov option is SmokefreeTXT](#). In addition to the general service, SmokefreeTXT offers programs for a variety of audiences, including veterans, women who are pregnant, and teens. The general and veterans' programs are available in Spanish, too.

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Evidence-Based Practice 6: Communication with Employees

Effective communication strategies are critical for delivering information about tobacco cessation choices available in the workplace. The frequency of messaging, as well as communicating in new and different ways, contributes to the overall healthy corporate culture and helps to keep employees motivated. ^{(10) (11)}

Communication should include proactive, engaging messaging and not something an employee would have to search for in an employee handbook or on a web portal.

Recognize that messaging about tobacco prevention and cessation may feel stigmatizing to some people. This may be especially true for those who have a condition or are at risk for a condition that has been linked to tobacco use.

Implementation Options

The channels that you have employed that have been effective at delivering other important work-related news are the same channels that you might use to communicate tobacco-related policies and programs.

Conduct tobacco cessation campaigns. The American Cancer Society [Great American Smokeout® \(GASO\) program](#), traditionally celebrated on the third Thursday in November, can be used to build a year-round promotional campaign. The program focuses on the idea that quitting often takes time and a plan and seeks to inspire smokers to commit to smoke-free lives – not just for a day, but year-round. Visit [cancer.org](#) to learn more about quitting smoking and how to support those trying to quit if you have questions or need other ideas for messaging.

Send reminders to employees. In addition to open enrollment, your organization should send reminders to employees about insurance coverage for prescription non-nicotine cessation medications, over-the-counter nicotine replacement therapies, face-to-face counseling (individual or group) and quitline programs. Ideas for active messaging include using corporate network messages, posters, and mail reminders to employees' homes.

Communicate with employees regularly. In addition to open enrollment, communicate with your employees about tobacco cessation, strategies, and support for quitting at least four times each year. Remember, “communication” is proactive and engaging messaging. Also, consider communicating with the spouses or partners of your employees to provide another layer of promotion.

Post flyers, posters, and informational materials throughout your worksite. If you have employees who use languages other than English, make sure materials are available in those languages, too. Please contact your American Cancer Society representative for more information about available materials.

Tools and Resources*

Tools and resources for employers

- American Cancer Society Stay Away From Tobacco
<https://www.cancer.org/healthy/stay-away-from-tobacco.html>
- Health Risks of Secondhand Smoke – Messaging around the health risks of secondhand smoke to family and friends, including pets, can make a difference.
<https://www.cancer.org/healthy/stay-away-from-tobacco/health-risks-of-tobacco.html>

Tools and resources for employees

- The Tips From Former Smokers® campaign Includes videos of real-life smokers who have quit and are categorized by specific population group or by disease type of the smoker, where applicable.
<https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/campaign/tips/resources/videos/index.html>
- What Do We Know About E-Cigarettes? <https://www.cancer.org/cancer/cancer-causes/tobacco-and-cancer/e-cigarettes.html>
- Questions and Answers about E-Cigarettes for Parents
<https://www.cancer.org/content/dam/cancer-org/cancer-control/en/booklets-flyers/questions-and-answers-about-e-cigarettes-for-parents.pdf>

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