Environmental Health and Safety

Smoking Cessation Information Bulletin

The University of Manitoba’s clean air policy is now in full effect and people are advised that smoking is no longer permitted on the property at the Bannatyne Campus or within 25 feet of any building on the Fort Garry Campus. In response to this, you may have decided to quit smoking. Environmental Health and Safety Office (EHSO) is providing the following information to assist you.

Smoking is one of the most difficult addictions to break. Effects are not “in your head”, but involve a large number of serious physical symptoms as well. Remember, the more discomfort you experience stopping, the more effect smoking has been having on you. Most people require 10 days to recover from the actual addiction but a month before the physical symptoms of “recover” begin to resolve. Hopefully this information explains why you feel the way you do and what can be done to speed recovery or lessen the stress of quitting. Good luck and if you need more information or assistance, call EHSO at 474-6633.

What are the dangers of smoking? We all know it causes cancer. Close to 90% of lung cancers in men, and 80% in women are caused by cigarette smoking. It is associated with cancers of the mouth, pharynx, larynx, esophagus, stomach, pancreas, uterine cervix, kidney, ureter, bladder and colon and it is also linked to Leukemia. There are increased risks of cardiovascular diseases stroke, sudden death, cardiac arrest, peripheral vascular disease and aortic aneurism. Many components of cigarette smoke irritate the lining of the respiratory system increasing mucus secretion (smoker’s cough) and causing chronic loss of lung function (ability to breath). Carbon Monoxide binds with red bloods cells making the body produce more red bloods cells to replace those that are bound. The result is thicker blood. (More likely to form clots). What else happens? Cigarette smoke has 4,700 harmful chemicals such as arsenic, cadmium, carbon monoxide, hydrogen cyanide, formaldehyde, acroleim and nickel to name a few. Some poisons like nicotine have a pleasant effect relaxing you, helping you concentrate, making you feel good and controlling your weight. These are some of the effects that keep you addicted. For some people, it can be as addictive as heroin or cocaine! Smoking can raise your blood pressure by causing blood vessels to constrict as much as 25%. If you have a 75% or more blood vessel blockage and you smoke, you will close off this vessel. If it feeds your heart you have a heart attack. If it feeds the brain you have a stroke. If it feeds other important organs such as kidneys or stomach, kidney damage or ulcers may result. It can cause fertility problems, making men impotent (be aware this means unable to achieve or hold an erection Not to become infertile although this may also be a problem for some), it decreases circulation of blood to the skin resulting in wrinkling and aging. Wow. That’s a lot of problems. And your family? What can happen with second hand smoke? It has been known to cause cancer. Children may get asthma, tonsillitis, ear infections and even sudden infant death. And, they learn how to smoke from you!

Effects of smoking do not disappear right away. What can I gain by stopping?
• At 120 days all your bloods cells are replaced. Carbon Monoxide attaches to red blood cells and does not release, the body must produce more red blood cells to provide enough oxygen to meet body needs. If you do nothing else to improve your health except to stop smoking, in 120 days all these extra useless red blood cells are cleared from your blood. You will find you have more energy, and more endurance. You will get short of breath less quickly. This happens over 4 months and you may not actually notice the change. To test it, you might want to walk up flights of stairs to see how many you can do comfortably before you quit. Then, after 4 months try walking the same stairs and see how many more you can do even without an exercising. At 5 to 15 years your risk stroke drops to the same as it would have been if you never smoked. At 10 years your risk of lung cancer drops to as half that of smokers.
- risk of cancer of the mouth, throat, esophagus, bladder, kidney, & pancreas decreases.
- risk of developing ulcers decreases.
At 15 years your risk of coronary heart disease is now similar to those who never smoked and your risk of death returns to nearly the level of people who have never smoked.
If you decide to quit. How do you do this? The 4 most common ways to quit smoking are:

1) **Cold Turkey** - You just butt out your last cigarette and not smoke again. (Easier said than done). This is one of the more successful processes but people usually go cold turkey a few times before they can actually give up the habit.

2) **Nicotine patch.** (Habitrol, Nicoderm, Nicotrol) This is a non prescription medication that comes in various dosages & brands. Do see a doctor before going on the patch. You must quit smoking when you go on the patch. A patch is put on daily and left on for 24 hours to provide a continuing supply of nicotine. It lessens cravings helping break the habit of smoking, the “oral habit”. You wear the patch, often 22 mg. for about a month, then switch to a 14 mg. patch for a month and then to a 7 mg. patch for another month. If you are a very heavy smoker, you may need more time than one month to drop to a lower dosage patch. You will still, even while wearing the patch experience withdrawal but with less intensity. By following the program you wean yourself down from the nicotine. When you stop using the patch you go “cold turkey” and it takes about two weeks for the last effects of the nicotine to disappear. If you follow this program you should not quit the patch sooner than recommended and never cut a patch in half.

The nicotine in the patch is not addicting or known to cause cancer. The most common side effects are skin irritation and sleep disturbances. Move the patch to different parts of your body every day and if you get a skin reaction try a different brand. If you have problems sleeping this is likely due to smoking withdrawal and will likely disappear in time. If you have nightmares, try taking the patch off while you sleep. If you do not smoke heavily you may be getting more nicotine from the patch than when you smoked. You may need to drop down to a lower dosage of patch.

Note: People with allergies to adhesive bandages or who have skin diseases should not use the patch.

3) **Nicotine chewing gum** – (Nicorette, Nicorette Plus) There is no prescription for nicotine chewing gum but you should consult a doctor before using it. The correct way to chew this gum is to bite it a few times to release the nicotine and then “park” it in your cheek. Do not chew it again until you have the urge to smoke. Then chew it a few times and park it again. Smokers need between 2 and 10 pieces of gum per day depending on how often they chew the gum and how much they smoked in the past. Gum does not eliminate cravings but should help lessen them. Most people need to chew the gum for 3 months before they can discontinue this support. Do not chew this gum continuously as it can become addicting. If you must chew chew, try parking your gum in a container and chew ordinary gum until you have the urge to smoke. Then you can pull out your nicotine gum and get the dosage you require to ease the craving.

While nicotine gum can be addicting, this is rare. There are a lot less harmful chemicals in this gum than in tobacco products. This gum does not cause cancer or many other serious health problems associated with smoking. The most common side effects are burning in the throat, hiccups or dental problems.

4) **Zyban or Bupropion** This is an antidepressant found to help lessen the effects of nicotine withdrawal. It is a prescription drug. If you have a drinking problem or take over the counter meds, be sure to tell your doctor. You begin treatment by taking this pill 7 to 10 days before you quit smoking to build up a blood level that will help you. It will not prevent your cravings but should lessen your discomfort.

5) **Cutting down** is one way people try to decrease their smoking habit. It is not usually very successful. Some people try to wean themselves by using “Light, mild or low-tar cigarettes”. These are not healthier. Measurements for these cigarettes are based on machines smoking them. People are not machines. Some light cigarettes have vent holes in the filter. Smoke machines don’t block the holes. People block these holes with their lips and fingers. If the cigarette does remain vented, people craving nicotine, inhale deeper, take longer more rapid or frequent puffs inhaling more tar, nicotine and chemicals than machine based numbers suggest. Tobacco paper on light cigarettes burns faster so smoking machines get only a few puffs before the cigarettes burns down. If you do not get the nicotine you crave from the cigarette, you smoke more cigarettes.
The Federal NCI recently concluded light cigarettes provide no benefits to smokers.

6) Hypnosis is used by some to help decrease the stress from stop smoking. Some people swear by hypnosis and others have no success with it. It is a simple safe method of trying to stop smoking. There is no harm in trying it if you want to. You may learn some nice ways to relax. There are two different ways to do hypnosis. One is to see a clinical psychologist and the other is to purchase a self help tape. Some people find hypnosis helpful and report no withdrawal symptoms. If you plan to try a clinical psychologist, check your Great West Life Policy to see if the clinical psychologist is covered by the University health plan. Be sure to ask them if they are a clinical psychologist.

Conditioned responses are powerful and easy to create.
Here's the way to start. “Relax, close your eyes (not while you are reading this) and imagine yourself in a future moment when you no longer smoke. Make it as real as you can, adding a visual experience as well as the sounds, the smells, the emotions, etc. Spend time in your imaginary future when you are a nonsmoker. Take a trip on your future time line, to a time when you have completely forgotten about smoking, where it does not bother you a bit, and then let yourself look back on the time line and remember how EASY it was for you to stop. Reflect on the amazement you felt when you realized that one day you stopped having any desire for tobacco, and never gave it another thought. Now, let yourself really feel the freedom you have. Notice what it is like to no longer being owned by cigarettes, that your thoughts are your own, you are free to choose what you want to do and where you want to go, without cigarettes coming into your thoughts. Spend lots of time here in the future, and let your mind take these future resources back with you. Create this anchor for these future resources: Press your thumb and finger together on your right hand and hold it for about 30 seconds. Now imagine yourself even farther in the future, at a time when you really don't even think about smoking ever. Make it very real. Anchor it in with the thumb a finger for about 30 seconds. Now, the touch of the thumb and finger connects a feeling in your brain, or a STATE with the trigger a squeeze of your thumb and finger. Now, bring yourself back to the present moment while you are still holding your thumb and finger together. That is your anchor for the STATE of being a nonsmoker.” You are creating a new conditioned response, or trigger. Any time you think you want a cigarette, stop, remind yourself that the urge will be gone in a moment.

If you want to join a group try calling the Manitoba Lung Association for information on support groups.

7) Acupuncture
According to a study into acupuncture for smoking cessation, (White, AR, Rampes H, Ernst E. Acupuncture for smoking cessation. (Cochrane review in Cochraine Library Issue 3, 2004 Chichester, UK: John Wiley & Sons Limited) there was no clear evidence that acupuncture, acupressure, laser therapy or electro stimulation were effective for smoking cessation. However, if you feel that one of these might help you quit, try it. You have nothing to lose and everything to gain. Okay, if you are still reading this it is likely you have decided smoking is something you no longer want to do. Sooooo, where do we go from here?

The first Step is to Prepare to stop smoking.

1. Select the method you want to use to stop. See your doctor, purchase the product, understand how it works and get set to go.
2. Keep a diary for a week before you quit to record when and why you smoke. This will alert you to avoid situations that are triggers to encourage you to smoke. Put a small pencil and card in your cigarette pack. Some common triggers are – stress, being with friends who smoke, when having a glass of wine, the telephone, after eating, resting after work.
3. Form a team. You need help from friends and family. Let them know what you are
doing and ask for their help. If a spouse smokes, you can’t insist they quit too (you can ask and encourage them) but you can make a pact that they not smoke in front of you. Hopefully they will be willing to leave the home when they smoke and keep all cigarettes, lighters and ashtrays away from you. (Some people put them in their garage so it is available but out of the house). You might be able to establish a hotline to call with other people who also are trying to quit.

4. Select a low stress time. Just before the wedding, or starting a new job, or Christmas might not be the easiest time to quit. I stopped by taking a vacation with a non smoking friend. We camped in the wilds where there were no stores. Every time I got cranky, she would declare “Time for a walk”. I not only quit smoking, I got in shape!

5. Plan a schedule to keep busy. Join a club or group. Go where smoking is not allowed (easier now in Manitoba with the new no smoking in public places policy).

6. Try a relaxation tape and play it when you are stressed. A very good tape is “Getting Rid of Stress” sold at most book stores. Play it daily for a week before stopping smoking to accustom yourself to it. Keep one in the car and one in the house if it helps you.

7. Most people need to get rid of all their smoke products. Clean out the car, house, and ashrays - at home and work. Some people find this creates more stress. They worry that if they get desperate, they will have nothing on hand to save them. This causes worry and their stress and they panic. These people might benefit from wrapping a cigarette and placing it in the refrigerator so they know one is available in an emergency.

8. Wash curtains, clothes and if possible clean rugs. Get the smoke smell out of your house.

9. Avoid Alcohol. It will not soften your resolution to stop, it will act as a smoke trigger.

10. Start exercising and eat proper food. Good habits help when withdrawal symptoms begin.

11. When you quit, don’t smoke – even one puff takes you back immediately to your addiction.

12. Decide how to keep your mouth and hands busy. Get in raw vegetables, buy sugar free gum. Use a “worry bead” or squeeze a soft ball, do a jigsaw puzzle.

13. Make yourself a wish jar and when you quit, put the money you would be spending on tobacco into the jar. Plan to reward yourself with a special treat. Do you need a new car, a deck on your house? Do you want a special holiday? Do you need new clothes? Are you going back to school? Is there a special golf club or piece of jewelry you would love to have?

Are you ready? Now pick a day to quit. Tell everyone your date. Mark the calendar. List all the reasons why you want to quit. Make yourself a non-smoking contract and sign it. Stick to it!

What are the withdrawal symptoms you may experience and what should you do? Be aware that these are common symptoms but not everyone has them. It is not likely you will have all of them.

- **Cough and mucus** - When we smoke we inhale fumes burning at tremendously high temperatures. In order to prevent the smoke from burning our mouth, throat and lungs, our body produces more mucus. This is burned off with the high temperatures. When we stop smoking we do not burn off the excess moisture but we keep producing it until our body realizes it is unnecessary. Have you noticed you cough more in the morning when you have stopped smoking for the night? Solution. - Drink lots of fluids, especially water. Get exercise. This will help clear the fluid as it forms. Symptoms may last a few days.

- **Light headed and dizzy, disoriented, headaches**. -This is a common symptom likely due changes to the amounts of oxygen you are getting. It may also be caused by a drop in blood pressure. You are actually returning to normal functioning and health. Solution -Drink lots of fluids to keep your blood pressure up. Remind people what you are doing and get their support. Take a few minutes to relax. Breathe slow and deeply. Symptoms rarely last more than a day or two.

- **Poor Concentration** – You may be distracted and thinking about withdrawal symptoms. Your body is undergoing a number of physical changes and so you feel not quite right. Solution -Try not to stop smoking
when you have a deadline or special project that requires lots of concentration. You may want to stop just before vacation. These symptoms may last one or two weeks. Let people know what is happening.

- **Fatigue** – Nicotine is a stimulant and you miss the “short pep up” you get from a nicotine burst. As you recover from the effects of stopping smoking your energy levels will increase. Solution - Fatigue often occurs in the afternoon 2 to 4 pm. Try not to plan activities for this time. Eat properly. If craving for cigarettes has increased your sugar consumption, this will contribute to a variety of withdrawal symptoms, especially fatigue. Don’t eat sweets. Eat raw fruit and vegetables instead.

- **Cardio Vascular changes** Some people have increased heart rate, or change in body temperature. Blood pressure usually drops and there is a general feeling of being less well. Solution – These are good signs that the body is correcting bad smoking responses. Your pressure is returning to normal and your body is responding. Remind yourself that you are getting better. Drink lots of fluids and get active. This will end in a week or two.

- **Hunger** - Smoking “satisfies hunger craving” and stopping smoking makes you hungry. You will miss the oral satisfaction you get from smoking and feel a need to put something in your mouth. Solution - Drink water. It’s more helpful than eating and gaining weight. In response to a craving for sweets, eat fruits and vegetables that have more complex sugars that are released into your body more slowly. Eat low calorie foods. Avoid negative eating habits. Do not put food into your mouth every time you think of smoking. Distract yourself by going for a walk, work on a project, read, or visit a non smoking friend. This symptom may last for a few weeks and you need to guard against weight gain by eating properly.

- **Insomnia** – Withdrawal from nicotine will cause you to have problems sleeping. It is not uncommon to dream of smoking. Solution – Avoid drinking coffee, cola or chocolate in the evening. You might try Chamomile tea, “Sleepy Time” tea or warm milk. Do deep breathing. Take a hot bath. Take a few moments to relax before going to bed. Listen to your “Letting go of Stress” tape. These symptoms usually don’t last longer than one week.

- **Irritability** – The major cause is the withdrawal from the Nicotine. The body will crave this chemical. Not sleeping well, feeling hungry, missing the oral satisfaction of smoking contributes to irritability. There is also a feeling of losing your old friend “smoking”. Smoking has helped you deal with stress, loneliness and nervousness. You will miss being able to deal with these feelings as you have in the past. Solution - Prepare yourself and your family for this symptom. Deal with stress by going for a walk or do something you enjoy. If you are lonely, get out and be around people. If there is no one you can talk to, go to a concert, or the zoo, visit the mall. Distract yourself with any activity you enjoy. This symptom lasts an average of 2 to 4 weeks. This is a symptom you are doing something good for yourself. It is temporary.

- **Depression** – Is a common feeling. The feeling of hunger, fatigue, inability to sleep may not seem worth all the suffering. You feel cheated and miss smoking. Just remember, you will feel guilty later if you start smoking now. Hang on and this will pass. Solution – Try to think of these as positive symptoms. You are getting healthy by getting rid of the addiction to nicotine. You will feel better soon. You will no longer be ruled by the urge to smoke. Keep active. Get outdoors and walk. Visit friends. Go see a movie. Confide your feeling to those near to you. Give yourself a treat. If it continues, see your doctor.

- **Constipation** - Smoking stimulates gut movement and stopping smoking may cause you to be constipated. Solution – Drink lots of fluids, particularly water. Add bulk to your diet (whole grains, cereals, fruits and vegetables). Walk or increase your physical activity some other way. If you still have problems see your doctor. This should last only a week or two as your body adjusts.

- **Chest Tightness** – The direct cause is unknown but is likely due to Nicotine withdrawal. Solution – Take slow deep breaths just as you did when you inhaled. Be sure to blow all the air out of your lungs. It is likely this will pass in a few days but if it does not, check with your doctor.

- **Cravings** – You have a true addiction to the drug nicotine and are missing it. You miss the social interaction of friends who do smoke. You miss the oral satisfaction you have drawing on a cigarette. Smoking was a real pleasure and you are giving up the pleasure in exchange for better health. You are missing smoking. Solution - Cravings are most frequent 2 to 7 days after stopping smoking. Take
one day at a time. This is a temporary situation. Distract yourself. Go for a walk, read, watch TV, do gardening, start a hobby, clean your house, tidy the garage, play cards, plan a holiday, just do something! Get yourself a package of sugar free gum, suckers, tooth picks to chew on if you have to have something for your mouth. (Yes I know there are not good for you but they are a lot better than tobacco). This urge last 2 to 3 weeks but it can surface a year or two after you stop smoking although it is less intense and much less common. Ignore it for 5 minutes and you will suddenly realize it has passed and you did not go back to smoking. Congratulations!

5 D’s to remember if you have the urge to smoke.

1. Delay a minute or two and the urge will pass.
2. Drink water to fight off cravings
3. Do something do distract yourself, walk, call a friend, clean a closet.
4. Deep breathe. It will relax you. Close your eyes and take 10 slow deep breaths.
5. Discuss your thoughts and feelings with someone close to you.

When you get badly tempted to smoke remind yourself of why you are quitting.

1. Your health
2. Your family’s health no longer suffering from second hand smoke.
3. Your family’s excitement that you are not smoking.
4. You are saving money!
5. Your home insurance rate will go down. (Be sure to tell your home and personal insurance brokers you quit smoking. Most companies will give a discount after you quit for 6 months.)
6. You no longer depend on cigarettes or feel desperate when you can’t have one.
7. You don’t want to feel guilty about smoking again.
8. You will not get wrinkles as fast and will look younger longer.
9. If you are a man you will lessen the chance of impotency later in life.
10. Women who get pregnant are less likely to have a premature or a low weight baby.
11. You don’t have to find a place to smoke. (It is getting harder to find one). You don’t have to leave the group to go for a smoke. You don’t have to go out in the rain or cold to smoke when out in public places or at work.
12. If you travel on public transport you will not have withdrawal while on the move and can relax and enjoy the trip.
13. You will be in better shape and not huff and puff with every little movement.
14. Your children live in a smoke free home and you will not be teaching them how to smoke.
15. You smell better. Your breath is fresh. Your clothes smell clean.
16. Your house is cleaner. There is less nicotine and smoke on walls, windows, carpets, and everything in the house.
17. You don’t put over 4,000 foreign chemicals in your body several times a day.
18. You have a much better chance of living longer and healthier.
19. You will not get sick with colds and flu as often.
20. You can keep adding to that money jar to buy that special treat you promised yourself.

Keep going, you can do it!

Taken in part from The Cancer Society’s Smokers’ Helpline November 25, 2003 NYS smokers Quitsite Directory Lacroix Chantal, M.D., Tremblay Michele, MD. GervaisAndre, M.D. Tabagisme – Direction de sante publique de Montreal April 2000