

# **PATIENT** **RESOURCE GUIDE** 2020



**QUIT WEEK IN OKLAHOMA IS  
JANUARY 15-22, 2020**

**If you're here**, it's likely that you're thinking about seeing a healthcare provider to discuss quitting smoking. We want to say: that's great! Congratulations on taking this major step in preparing to quit smoking. Quitting smoking is a difficult task, but advice and support from a healthcare provider that includes counseling and medication can double your chances of quitting smoking.

We at "OK to Quit" want you to have the greatest success possible. To that end, we've assembled a handful of resources we believe will help you in your journey. We've included resources around speaking with your healthcare provider, what questions you should ask, strategies to help you quit, even instructions on how to download an app called Quitters Circle that will be with you every step of your journey.

**We wish you much success!**

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# 5-PATIENT RESOURCES | SPEAKING WITH YOUR HEALTHCARE PROVIDER

You may be feeling nervous by the idea of [discussing quitting](#) with your doctor. Remember that they're there to help you, and quitting smoking is one of the most important things you can do to improve your health. You can expect that your doctor will ask questions about how much you smoke, how often, and how many times you've quit in the past. They may also ask your reasons for quitting and methods you have used to quit before.

The questions your healthcare provider asks can help them determine the smoking cessation treatment that best suits your needs, so it's important to be honest. The more information you give, the more [your doctor will be able to help](#) you start your quit journey. It may help to think about these questions in advance so you can have an effective visit.

It's important for you to have your own questions handy, too. This is YOUR quit journey: take the time to make sure you're aware of the process and potential bumps in the road you may face.

## HERE ARE 5 GREAT RESOURCES WE FOUND TO HELP YOU PARTNER WITH YOUR PHYSICIAN:

# 1

**The Doctor Discussion Guide:** is a resource you can take with you when you're ready to have that first conversation about quitting smoking with your healthcare provider. It includes questions about your reasons for quitting smoking, common nicotine withdrawal symptoms, and whether you should make a quit plan, to help get you started. Fill in the blanks, answer the questions, and make notes of your own on the page. If you don't have a printer, you can read the questions and your answers off your phone while talking to your doctor. [Download here!](#)

# 2

**Questions to Ask your Doctor:** Talking to your healthcare provider is an important part of re-learning your life without cigarettes. Letting them get a quick picture of your general health before you quit is a good idea. Additionally, healthcare providers can answer many questions you have about medications to help you quit smoking. If you're worried about what to say to your doctor or simply don't know what to ask, take this list of questions with you on your next appointment as a guide. [Access here! Questions to Ask Your Doctor.](#)

# 3

**Quit Smoking: [Strategies to help you quit](#)** (Mayo Clinic): You know that when you quit smoking, it's one of the best things you can do for your health. But you also know that quitting smoking can be challenging and that it takes most smokers several tries before they succeed. So how do you quit smoking, hopefully for good? These tried-and-true strategies can help you achieve your goal to quit smoking.

## 4

**There's an app for that!!** OK to Quit believes that the app "Quitter's Circle" is a great resource to help you along your quit-smoking journey. Here's some information to get you started:

Quitter's Circle is for smokers who want to make a quit attempt. It includes a mobile app, a website, and Twitter and Facebook pages.

1. Download the Quitters Circle app from the App Stores (for Apple devices) or Google play (for Android devices).
2. When prompted for code, enter OktoQuit
3. Respond to all start-up questions. Accurate responses will enable the app to send you the most relevant quit content based on your current progress.

[Download here! OktoQuit Quitter's Circle Information sheet.pdf](#)

## 5

**1 800 QUIT NOW:** Don't forget, there are free resources to available to those who want to quit through the Oklahoma Tobacco Helpline at 1 800 QUIT NOW or by visiting [www.okhelpline.com](http://www.okhelpline.com).

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## MYTHS ABOUT SMOKING

### **MYTH: SMOKING IS ENTIRELY A PERSONAL CHOICE**

**FACT:** Tobacco contains nicotine. Nicotine is addictive. Nicotine addiction is so powerful that it can be considered a "brain disease" because of the way it affects receptors in the brain and throughout the body. Many people who start smoking quickly become addicted to nicotine.

### **MYTH: THERE IS NO POINT IN QUITTING SMOKING NOW THAT I HAVE CANCER.**

**FACT:** It is never too late to quit smoking. People who quit smoking after a cancer diagnosis live longer, have a better chance of successful treatment, have fewer side effects from treatment, recover faster, and have a better quality of life.

### **MYTH: SMOKING WILL HELP ME DEAL WITH THE STRESSES OF CANCER TREATMENT. IT WILL BE TOO STRESSFUL TO QUIT SMOKING AT THE SAME TIME.**

**FACT:** Nicotine does not help with stress relief. The calming effect you feel when you smoke is actually the relief of nicotine withdrawal. The symptoms of nicotine withdrawal can begin just 20 minutes after your last cigarette. Breaking a nicotine addiction is hard and uncomfortable. But the health benefits of quitting outweigh the discomfort.

# MYTHS ABOUT SMOKING (cont'd)

**MYTH:** SMOKERS CAN QUIT ON THEIR OWN. A DOCTOR'S ADVICE ISN'T NEEDED.

**FACT:** Smoking is an addiction. While some people are able to quit on their own, most people are more successful when they have the help of clinicians, family, and friends. There are many effective tools to improve your chances of quitting. Doctors and other members of a health care team are available to provide support, information, and any necessary medications to help people quit.

**MYTH:** MOST TOBACCO-QUITTING PROGRAMS HAVE A LOW SUCCESS RATE.

**FACT:** Quitting smoking is hard and often requires several attempts until a person is permanently tobacco-free. Research has proven that counseling and medications improve the odds that you can quit smoking for the long term. There are several medications that can help you deal with nicotine withdrawal. Ask your doctor and other members of your health care team for help.

**MYTH:** IF MY DOCTOR DOES NOT DISCUSS TOBACCO USE, THEN IT MUST NOT BE IMPORTANT FOR MY CANCER TREATMENT.

**FACT:** The data are conclusive. In 2014, the Surgeon General released the report *The Health Consequences of Smoking—50 Years of Progress*. The report concludes that cancer patients and survivors who smoke are at increased risk of cancer coming back, getting a second cancer, and death. The dangerous risks of smoking apply to all cancer types and treatments.

## 7 MOTIVATIONAL MESSAGES

## TO GET YOU THROUGH THAT FIRST WEEK!!

**MESSAGE #1:** New Year, New You! (page 5)

**MESSAGE #2:** The Cost of Tobacco (page 6)

**MESSAGE #3:** Understand. Plan. Then Act. Part I (page 7)

**MESSAGE #4:** Understand. Plan. Then Act. Part II (page 8)

**MESSAGE #5:** Redefining Your Identity (page 9)

**MESSAGE #6:** Slipped Up? Don't Give Up! (page 10)

**MESSAGE #7:** What We Don't Always Think About (page 11)

# MESSAGE #1

## NEW YEAR, NEW YOU

The New Year is a clean slate, and there is never a shortage of things to get done. But remember that behavior change (and life) is a marathon, not a sprint. And in training for a marathon, there are some key tips that you want to keep in mind....

### **PREPARE WITH THE RIGHT EQUIPMENT AND KNOWLEDGE.**

Just as runners need the right shoes and clothing, we need the right tools and knowledge to successfully change a behavior.

### **DON'T GO IT ALONE**

As one marathon veteran said, "it makes running less daunting if there is a friend along for part of the run." The same goes for quitting tobacco. Have an accountability partner who will be there for you when those cravings pop up and who will encourage you to keep going with your quit.

### **PACE YOURSELF**

Finding a good, comfortable stride is critical for a marathon runner. The same goes for someone quitting tobacco. Don't suddenly decide to quit without developing a plan. If you slip up, get back up and keep going. You can find your pace and finish this race.

### **USE A MANTRA AND VISUALIZE SUCCESS**

Runners need to be extremely positive as they go into a race. You have to be positive as well. Tobacco users attempting to quit must believe they can be successful. Remember, your past quit attempts weren't "failures" they were simply practice runs to learn what works best for you.

### **REMEMBER...**

26 miles is a LONG way to run. It takes preparation and support to finish the task. The same goes for us. Having a plan, an accountability partner and effective tools and resources will go a long way to helping you finish strong.

# MESSAGE #2

## THE COST OF TOBACCO

The cost of tobacco use is high. You probably know that there is a health cost, as well as a financial cost, but do you know just how high that cost is?

The average price of a pack of cigarettes is \$6.28. That means the average smoker will spend:

<b>\$44</b>	<b>\$189</b>	<b>\$2,300</b>
<b>A WEEK</b>	<b>A MONTH</b>	<b>A YEAR (APPROX)</b>

In 20 years, that is over \$83,000 spent on an addiction that is designed to harm you.

In addition to the amount spent on tobacco, quitting now can help you save money on breath mints, cough drops and cleaning expenses for your home, clothes and car. By quitting, you will also increase your chances to avoid the extra costs of health care due to smoking-related diseases and secondhand smoke. And your family will benefit with more time together.

To see how much you are spending, visit <https://smokefree.gov/how-much-will-you-save>. For more information and help quitting, call 1 800 QUIT NOW or visit [www.okhelpline.com](http://www.okhelpline.com).

### REMEMBER...

Whether your motivation is due to money, health or your family, the savings in quitting tobacco can provide huge benefits for you and your family.

# MESSAGE #3

## UNDERSTAND. PLAN. THEN ACT.

### PART I

Tobacco dependence involves two critical pieces; the physical habit of using the tobacco and the physical addiction that the nicotine in tobacco causes. Today we will focus on how to handle the physical addiction to nicotine so that you will be better equipped and more comfortable as you address the long term behavior changes.

#### ADDRESSING THE PHYSICAL ADDICTION TO NICOTINE

If you've tried to quit before, you know one of the hardest parts about quitting is dealing with the withdrawal symptoms from nicotine.

The good news is, for most people, the worst symptoms only last a few days to a couple of weeks. However, having a plan to deal with these symptoms is critical to avoid relapsing.

Developing coping skills will help for the long term, but in the meantime medications like Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRT) can be used to handle withdrawal symptoms.

*"In quitting tobacco, meds are like shoes. You know how you try on shoes and some fit and some don't? Well, you don't give up wearing shoes do you? It's the same way with tobacco cessation medication. You try them on (use them properly) and see if they fit."*

What we have seen and heard is that most people who don't know HOW to use NRT correctly, started with too low of a dose, or dosed down too quickly. If this was you, you aren't alone.

#### DOSING IS THE KEY

Think about this, one pack of cigarettes contains approximately 20 mg of nicotine. So how can a 14 mg patch keep a pack a day smoker comfortable? And a two pack a day smoker? Forget it. The amount of nicotine in the NRT you are using to quit tobacco needs to be equal to what your body is currently used to.

The QuitCoaches at the Oklahoma Tobacco Helpline (1 800 QUIT NOW) can help you with this as well. (And you can get free NRT if you are ready to quit.)

#### REMEMBER....

Quitting tobacco is tough, but simply using cessation medication correctly can double your chances of quitting. (And you'll be saving money in the process.)



# MESSAGE #4

## UNDERSTAND. PLAN. THEN ACT.

### PART II

Tobacco dependence involves two critical pieces; the physical habit of using the tobacco and the physical addiction that the nicotine in tobacco causes. Last time, we discussed the use of medication to help you control the physical cravings. Being more comfortable will help you to focus on the behavioral changes to become tobacco free. Today we will focus on how to make a plan so you can learn to avoid the behavioral pitfalls and triggers that lead to smoking.

#### CHANGING HABITUAL BEHAVIORS

Think about anything you do on “autopilot,” whether it is driving to work, your morning routine or whatever it may be. Now, imagine doing that 10-20 times a day, EVERY day, for years.

This means, for a pack a day smoker who has smoked for 10 years, they have done the same behavior about 73,000 times.

Sitting down to coffee | Getting in the car | Breaks at work | After dinner

Changing habitual behaviors takes time, patience, and persistence. Understanding the key components of developing a quit plan can help you address these habitual behaviors so you will be more confident as you quit tobacco.

To successfully quit, you will need to adjust some of your daily habits that you associate with your tobacco use. The QuitCoaches at the Oklahoma Tobacco Helpline (1-800-QUIT-NOW) can help with this. (And their help is free!)

#### REMEMBER....

Quitting tobacco isn't a quick process. Different people will have different needs, as their triggers, addiction level, motivations and barriers are all different. Using your health benefits and the support of the Oklahoma Tobacco Helpline can make your chances of quitting seven times better than if you attempt to quit alone.

# MESSAGE #5

## REDEFINING YOUR IDENTITY

Knowing that tobacco dependence is a chronic disease, you will have to redefine who you are once you decide to quit. You may have to restructure daily routines and habits. Routes to work, morning and evening routines, workout schedules, family activities, etc.

- You also have to reprogram your internal thinking and self-identity.
- Your family will be healthier because of your decision.
- You will feel more control.
- You can have more energy, exercise more and become healthier every day.
- One critical piece to this change is deciding to be a “nonsmoker” rather than an “ex-smoker”. This mindset doesn’t happen right away, but it can be critical to success.
- Ex-smokers tend to view themselves as smokers who are not smoking today, but smoking may still be an option for them.
- Nonsmokers have made a decision that smoking is NOT an option for them. This doesn’t mean the urges go away, but it does mean that they don’t allow themselves to smoke.

### THE DIFFERENCE IS IN YOUR POSITIVE MINDSET.

#### EX-SMOKER

Smoking (or not smoking) is a daily choice.  
“I can’t smoke.”  
Tobacco is a punishment or reward.  
Is still fighting being chained to their addiction.

#### NONSMOKER

Smoking is not an option.  
“I won’t smoke.”  
Freedom from tobacco.  
Doesn’t feel they are missing out.

To become a nonsmoker, set up your lifestyle so that tobacco use doesn’t fit anymore. View yourself 5-10 years out as a nonsmoker. What does that look like?

#### REMEMBER....

It’s not always where or how you start out that will get you to your desired outcome. It is the heart, effort and commitment that you put into your life and healthy behavior changes. When you make changes because you are confident, motivated and ready, you will find ways to be successful.

# MESSAGE #6

## SLIPPED UP? DON'T GIVE UP!

It's normal to slip up when you are quitting tobacco, so don't let a slip up make you give up. The great thing about slip ups is that you can learn from them.

- What was the situation you were in when you slipped up? How can you avoid that situation or be prepared the next time you are in it?
- What made you crave the tobacco? How can you be ready next time the craving hits? (Be sure that you are using the right dose of Nicotine Replacement Therapy or other cessation medications so you feel more in control and able to handle cravings when they hit.)

You can also call the QuitCoaches at the Oklahoma Tobacco Helpline at 1-800-QUIT-NOW to get support after a slip. They can help you plan for the next time you are tempted so you feel more confident and in control.

### REMEMBER....

If you slipped up, remind yourself why you decided to quit in the first place. Remind yourself of your goals and all that you want to accomplish with your new, healthier lifestyle.

# MESSAGE #7

## WHAT WE DON'T ALWAYS THINK ABOUT

**We don't question the fact that tobacco is harmful, but we don't always think about how far that harm can reach. Secondhand and thirdhand smoke are a real threat to kids and pets.**

- Secondhand smoke is the smoke that is exhaled from the smoker as well as the smoke that comes off the end of a burning cigarette.
- Thirdhand smoke is the residue that is left after the smoker is finished smoking. (Think about the yellow walls in a smoker's home.)

Young kids are in danger of the effects of secondhand smoke, particularly if the parent smokes in the house or in the car. But we can't forget about the smoke particles that settle on the carpet, car seat, toys and clothes. Thirdhand smoke is a big concern to infants who crawl on the floor and put toys and things in their mouths, causing them to ingest the smoking residue.

### **AND DON'T FORGET ABOUT OUR PETS.**

*"If smoking is that harmful to human beings, it would make sense that secondhand smoke would have an adverse effect on pets that live in the homes of smokers."* – Dr.Carolynn MacAllister, OSU Cooperative Extension veterinarian

Secondhand and thirdhand smoke pose a [significant health threat to pets](#). Both have been associated with oral cancer and lymphoma in cats, lung and nasal cancer in dogs, and lung cancer in birds.

One reason cats are susceptible is because of their grooming habits. They lick up the cancer-causing carcinogens that accumulate on their fur, exposing the mucous membrane in their mouth to the carcinogens.

In dogs, there is a higher incidence of nasal cancer for those living in a home with secondhand smoke. The increase was specifically found among the long-nosed breeds due to the higher amount of surface area exposed to the carcinogens. Short or medium-nosed dogs showed higher rates for lung cancer.

Pet birds are also threatened by secondhand smoke. Their respiratory system is hypersensitive to any type of pollutant in the air. The most serious consequences of exposure are pneumonia or lung cancer.

### **REMEMBER....**

The risks from secondhand and thirdhand smoke are real, even when we can no longer see the smoke. Our kids and pets are counting on us to keep them safe, particularly when they can't move away from the danger on their own.