



# Help Our Members Quit Smoking

Healthcare providers who help members quit smoking greatly increase the likelihood that the members will achieve long-term success.<sup>1</sup> Here is some helpful information and tips for discussions with our members.

## The facts

Tobacco smoke contains a deadly mix of more than 7,000 chemicals; hundreds are harmful, and about 70 can cause cancer.<sup>2</sup>

Smoking increases the risk for serious health problems, many diseases and death.

Stopping smoking is associated with the following health benefits:<sup>3</sup>

- Lowered risk for cancer
- Reduced risk for heart disease and stroke
- Reduced respiratory symptoms
- Reduced risk of lung diseases
- Reduced risk of infertility in women and reduced risk of low birth weight babies

## Sources

1. Association of American Medical Colleges. Physician Behavior and Practice Patterns Related to Smoking Cessation. A Report Prepared for the American Legacy Foundation. 2007.  
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[http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/data\\_statistics/fact\\_sheets/cessation/quitting/](http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/data_statistics/fact_sheets/cessation/quitting/)
3. Guide to Quitting Smoking. (n.d.). Retrieved from  
<http://www.cancer.org/healthy/stayawayfromtobacco/guidetoquittingsmoking/guide-to-quitting-smoking-toc>

## Ask every member about tobacco use at every visit

You should ask the member if they currently smoke or has ever smoked cigarettes or used other tobacco products. Then document the response in the member's chart. If the member is a former smoker or tobacco user, remind them of the many health benefits of not using tobacco.

## Ask every member to quit smoking

Keep in mind that a clinician's advice to quit is an important motivator for patients attempting to quit smoking. The advice should be clear, strong and personalized.

## Assist members with quitting

Remember that just a few minutes of provider counseling increases success rates significantly. Be understanding, as quitting smoking may require several attempts. People who stop smoking often start again because of withdrawal symptoms, stress and weight gain.

Studies have shown that to quit and not start again, smokers must deal with both the physical and mental dependence.<sup>3</sup> Counseling and medication are both effective for treating tobacco dependence, and using them together is even more effective.<sup>2</sup>

## Refer members for our smoking and tobacco cessation program

Our program, which is part of our Healthy Behaviors offerings, will assist members by addressing the physical, psychological, and behavioral issues of smoking and tobacco. There is also education about the triggers of tobacco use, quit tips, overcoming withdrawal symptoms and the benefits of quitting.

After members complete one month of the smoking and tobacco cessation program, they will receive a \$15 pre-paid Walgreen's gift card. When members self-report that they have had two months with no tobacco use, they will receive another \$15 pre-paid Walgreen's gift card.

To get more information call us toll free at 800-327-8613 or talk to your Provider Support Specialist.