



Patient & Family Guide  
2021

# Quitting Smoking to Lower Your Risk of Cervical Cancer



[www.nshealth.ca](http://www.nshealth.ca)

# Quitting Smoking to Lower Your Risk of Cervical Cancer

Cervical cancer is cancer that starts in the cervix. The cervix is the lower part of the uterus (womb) that opens at the top of the vagina.

## How does smoking increase my chance of getting cervical cancer?

- Smoking weakens your immune system's ability to fight off infection, like human papillomavirus (HPV).
- Human papillomavirus (HPV) is the most common sexually transmitted infection (STI).
- If your immune system is weakened and cannot fight off an HPV infection, it can lead to cervical cancer.
- Quitting smoking can make abnormal cervical changes better. This can lower your risk of developing cervical cancer.

## Other reasons to quit smoking:

- Quitting smoking will improve your general health.
- Quitting smoking sets a good example for people around you.

## **Did you know?**

- 1,750 Nova Scotians die from tobacco use every year.
- More than 34,000 Nova Scotians live with chronic (ongoing) diseases related to tobacco use.
- On average, smokers die 10 years sooner than non-smokers.

## **Nicotine replacement therapy**

- Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRT) replaces the nicotine found in cigarettes. It comes in gum, lozenges, patches, inhalers, and sprays.
- NRT is often used as part of a safe and effective strategy to quit smoking. You do not need a prescription for NRT.
- They can be bought at stores and pharmacies.
- NRT can increase your chance of quitting smoking by 50% to 60%.
- NRT is not covered under the Nova Scotia Pharmacare Program.

- **When using NRT, do not smoke or smoke as little as possible to lower the side effects.**  
Side effects of NRT include chest pain, nausea (feeling sick to your stomach), vomiting (throwing up), gastrointestinal symptoms (stomach problems), and insomnia (not being able to sleep).

## **Why are e-cigarettes not recommended?**

Health Canada does not currently recommend e-cigarettes as there is not enough safety information about the amount and types of chemicals in e-cigarettes, and their side effects. The production of e-cigarettes is not regulated.

**Using e-cigarettes to quit smoking is not recommended.**

## **Are there medications to help me quit smoking?**

- Medications that can help you quit smoking include:
  - › Bupropion (Wellbutrin®)
  - › Varenicline (Champix®)

- Both of these medications are covered under the Nova Scotia Pharmacare Program. You will need a prescription from a health care provider.
- Studies show that combining varenicline with an NRT can increase your chance of quitting smoking. Talk with your health care provider about whether this combination therapy may be right for you.

## **Are there other options to quit smoking?**

Behavioural therapies can help you to quit smoking. These include:

- Exercise programs
- Self-help programs, such as:
  - › **Freedom From Smoking**<sup>®</sup> - online quit smoking program, American Lung Association<sup>®</sup>  
<https://ala-web-dev-mvc-app.azurewebsites.net/quit-smoking/join-freedom-from-smoking>
  - › **Quit4Life** - handbook to help teens quit smoking, Health Canada  
[www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/health-concerns/tobacco/youth-zone/quit4life.html](http://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/health-concerns/tobacco/youth-zone/quit4life.html)

- › **Canadian Cancer Society** - booklets for smokers who are not quite ready to quit and those who are ready to try and quit  
[www.cancer.ca/en/support-and-services/support-services/quit-smoking/?region=ns](http://www.cancer.ca/en/support-and-services/support-services/quit-smoking/?region=ns)  
Phone: 902-423-6183  
Phone (toll-free): 1-800-639-0222  
Email: [ccs.ns@ns.cancer.ca](mailto:ccs.ns@ns.cancer.ca)
- Telephone counselling, such as:
  - › **Tobacco Free Nova Scotia**  
Phone: 811
  - › **Smokers' Helpline**  
[www.SmokersHelpline.ca](http://www.SmokersHelpline.ca)  
Phone (toll-free): 1-866-366-3667  
Text "iQuit" to: 123456
- Apps to help you track your progress, such as:
  - › Smoke Free (Apple/Android)
  - › Kwit (Apple/Android)
  - › LIVESTRONG MyQuit Coach (Apple/Android)
  - › Craving to Quit® (Apple/Android)
  - › Quit Pro (Apple)

**Behavioural therapies are most effective when combined with medication.**

- For more information about behavioural therapy options in Nova Scotia, visit:
  - › <https://tobaccofree.novascotia.ca/>

## How much will NRT cost?

The average smoker in Nova Scotia uses about 13 cigarettes each day. This costs about \$241 each month and \$2,893 each year.

<b>Cost of smoking compared to NRT (approximate costs only)</b>		
	20 cigarettes each day	10 cigarettes each day
Cigarettes	\$11.49	\$5.75
Nicotine patch (1 patch each day)	\$3.61	\$3.61
Nicotine gum (15 4 mg pieces of gum each day)	\$5.52	\$5.52
Nicotine lozenge (15 4 mg lozenges each day)	\$6.14	\$5.46
Nicotine inhaler (6 10 mg cartridges each day)	\$5.58	\$2.79

Adapted from <https://www.helpthemquit.ca/treatment/costs-coverage>. Copyright 2018 by McNeil Consumer Healthcare.

**Nova Scotia Health's Mental Health and Addictions Services** offers a stop smoking program and funding/supports for NRT:

- › <https://mha.nshealth.ca/en/services/stop-smoking-services#access>

**Tobacco Free Nova Scotia** can suggest community resources that have funding for NRT:

- › <https://tobaccofree.novascotia.ca/>

**Moffatt's Pharmacy** in Dartmouth may be able to access NRT funding for patients that do not have private insurance coverage.

- › Phone: 902-466-2345
- › Address: 184 Portland Street

**The Government of Canada** provides non-insured health benefits for First Nations clients:

- › [www.sac-isc.gc.ca/eng/1572537161086/1572537234517](http://www.sac-isc.gc.ca/eng/1572537161086/1572537234517)

If you have a private insurance plan, check to see if they cover the cost of NRT and smoking cessation programs provided by registered smoking cessation provider pharmacies.



## **Tips for quitting smoking**

- Set a date to quit. Avoid choosing a time that may already be stressful (like when you are moving or starting a new job, or have had a death in the family, etc.).
- Share your plan to quit smoking with your family and friends. Ask them to remind you of your plan to quit whenever you have a craving.
- If you have family or friends who smoke, ask them not to smoke in front of you.
- Plan a list of activities you can do instead of smoking when you have a craving.
- Eat healthy and stay active.
- If you find quitting smoking too challenging, start by lowering the number of cigarettes you smoke each day. When you feel ready, try to quit for good.

## **Resources**

### **Tobacco Cessation in Cancer Care**

Nova Scotia Health

- › [www.cdha.nshealth.ca/cancer-care-program-7](http://www.cdha.nshealth.ca/cancer-care-program-7)

### **Start Living a Tobacco Free Life: Methods to Help You Quit**

The Lung Association of Nova Scotia

- › <https://ns.lung.ca/sites/default/files/civicrm/Nova%20Scotia%20Quit%20Booklet%20MD-edits.pdf>

### **On the road to quitting: Guide to becoming a non-smoker**

Government of Canada

- › [www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/publications/healthy-living/road-quitting-guide-becoming-non-smoker.html](http://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/publications/healthy-living/road-quitting-guide-becoming-non-smoker.html)

### **Smokers' Helpline**

Canadian Cancer Society

- › [www.smokershelpline.ca](http://www.smokershelpline.ca)

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### Looking for more health information?

Find this pamphlet and all our patient resources here: <https://library.nshealth.ca/PatientEducation>

Contact your local public library for books, videos, magazines, and other resources.

For more information, go to <http://library.novascotia.ca>

Connect with a registered nurse in Nova Scotia any time: call 811 or visit <https://811.novascotia.ca>

Learn about other programs and services in your community: call 211 or visit <http://ns.211.ca>

*Nova Scotia Health Authority promotes a smoke-free, vape-free, and scent-free environment.*

*Please do not use perfumed products. Thank you!*

[www.nshealth.ca](http://www.nshealth.ca)

*Prepared by:* Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology: Division of Gynaecologic Oncology

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The information is not intended to be and does not constitute health care or medical advice.

If you have any questions, please ask your health care provider.

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The information in this pamphlet is to be updated every 3 years or as needed.