



Patient & Family Guide
2017

The Facts about Smoking and Heart Disease

Aussi disponible en français : *Les faits sur le
tabagisme et la maladie du cœur* (FF85-1948)



www.nshealth.ca

The Facts about Smoking and Heart Disease

This pamphlet explains the risks of tobacco use on the development of heart disease. The most common use of tobacco is cigarette smoking.

If you or your family member smokes, please use the information in this pamphlet to help you think about quitting or cutting down.

Talk with your health care provider for more information about smoking and heart disease. Ask about resources and support programs to help you quit smoking. There is also a list of resources at the end of this pamphlet.

Facts about smoking

(from the Heart & Stroke Foundation and Canadian Cancer Society)

- Cigarette smoking is the single most important cause of preventable illness and premature (early) death.
- The risk of heart disease is higher with the number of cigarettes smoked, how long you have been smoking, and if you started smoking at a young age.
- The rate of developing heart disease and the risk of dying from it is 60% greater for smokers than non-smokers.

- Tobacco smoke has thousands of toxic chemicals, including nicotine, which contribute (lead) to the development of heart disease by:
 - › raising your heart rate and blood pressure
 - › making your heart work harder
 - › raising your risk of blood clots
 - › lowering HDL (good) cholesterol and making LDL (bad) cholesterol worse
 - › damaging the lining of arteries and promoting the buildup of plaque (fatty deposits on artery walls)
 - › lowering the oxygen in your blood
- Continuing to smoke after a heart attack leads to 4 times the risk of a second heart attack, and increased risk of death within 4 years.
- Smokers are up to 4 times more likely to have a sudden cardiac death than non-smokers.
- 70,000 Canadians die each year from heart disease and stroke. 11,000 of these deaths, or 30 people a day, are because of smoking.
- 66% of adult smokers plan to quit in the next 6 months.

What are your questions?

Please ask. We are here to help you.

Facts about quitting smoking

- Quitting smoking is a process, not a single event.
- Nicotine is a powerfully addictive substance that has been compared to heroin and cocaine.
- Nicotine changes the brain and central nervous system so that you may have symptoms of withdrawal if you stop smoking.
- Most people who quit smoking have some withdrawal symptoms.
- Withdrawal symptoms can be controlled with skills and techniques that you can learn. Using non-smoking aids (such as patches and gum) can help you quit.
- Some people quit completely on their first try, but most people take more than one try.
- A lapse (slip-up) in quitting should not be seen as a failure. It is an opportunity to learn for the next try.
- You can quit smoking if you have:
 - › the determination to stop or cut down
 - › information about the quitting process and the effects on your health
 - › support from family, friends and co-workers
 - › time to make the physical, emotional and social changes needed to quit

What are the benefits of quitting smoking?

- Smokers with heart disease who quit lower their risk of a second heart attack and death by 50% in the first year.
- After 15 years of not smoking, the risks for heart attack and death are the same as for non-smokers.
- Quitting smoking has an immediate benefit on heart rate, blood pressure and your heart's workload.
- Oxygen levels in the blood and HDL (good) cholesterol levels get higher.
- LDL (bad) cholesterol levels are lowered and the rate of plaque buildup is lowered.

What are the long-term effects of quitting smoking?

Over time, quitting smoking:

- Improves circulation and your ability to exercise.
- Lowers symptoms, coughs and infections.
- Lowers the risk of getting cancer.
- Improves depression caused by nicotine withdrawal.
- Improves your sense of taste and smell.

You can quit and we can help.

Quitting smoking can improve the quality and length of your life and the lives of those around you.

Resources to help you quit smoking

NSHA Mental Health and Addictions Stop Smoking Services

Offers free confidential support through community programming.

- › To register, call: 902-424-8866 or toll-free: 1-866-340-6700
- › www.nshealth.ca/content/Stop-Smoking-Services

Tobacco Free Nova Scotia – 811

Trained counselors can provide information, answer questions and direct you to community resources.

- › Call: 811
- › Visit: <https://tobaccofree.novascotia.ca>

More information

Heart and Stroke Foundation

- › www.heartandstroke.ca

Canadian Cancer Society

- › www.cancer.ca/en/prevention-and-screening/live-well/smoking-and-tobacco/

Government of Canada

- › www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/smoking-tobacco.html

Health Canada

- › www.hc-sc.gc.ca/hc-ps/tobac-tabac/quit-cesser/nov-maintenant/index-eng.php

Looking for more health information?

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

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!

Nova Scotia Health Authority

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The information in this brochure is for informational and educational purposes only.

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.