

Wellness Articles

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If you would like to be added to the distribution list for these articles, please email: Rebecca.johnson2@albertahealthservices.ca. You will receive a monthly email containing articles for the upcoming four weeks.

An archive of past wellness articles is available at <http://www.albertahealthservices.ca/9966.asp>

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Quitting tobacco

For many people, giving up tobacco is easier said than done. Giving it up may be one the toughest challenges you face in life, but it will also be one of your most rewarding.

Everyone who uses tobacco can benefit from quitting and gain the health rewards that come with it. When you quit cigarettes and other tobacco products —no matter how old you are—you can decrease your risk of early death, heart attack and stroke, cancer, lung disease and sexual and reproductive problems.

There are other benefits to quitting as well, which are more immediate.

For example, within 20 minutes of quitting smoking, your blood pressure drops to a level similar to what it was before your last cigarette. Within eight hours, the carbon monoxide level drops in your body and the oxygen level in your blood increases to normal. Within 48 hours, your chances of having a heart attack start to go down and your sense of smell and taste begin to improve.

Within a year of quitting smoking, your risk of suffering a smoking-related heart attack is cut in half; so is your chance of getting cancer in your mouth, throat, esophagus, bladder, kidney, and pancreas. And within five years of quitting, you have the same chance of having a stroke as a non-smoker.

Being tobacco-free also means you're not exposing loved ones to second-hand and third-hand smoke, and you're setting a positive example for those around you who may be inspired to quit as well.

Those are some pretty big rewards when you think about it, for both yourself and your loved ones!



People use tobacco for different reasons, and there is no shortage of good reasons to quit. Longevity, quality of life, the cost of cigarettes or chewing tobacco, the impact it has on your friends and loved ones: these are all factors that may motivate you. But even with all of the motivation, quitting can still be a difficult process.

The nicotine in tobacco is an extremely addictive substance and when you stop using tobacco, your body starts to recover and you may feel strong symptoms of this recovery. Quitting can be done though! Especially with the right planning, tools and support.

Whether you're just starting to consider quitting smoking, or you've already committed to quitting, the help you are looking for is available from AlbertaQuits. There are a wide range of services to help you quit, including a free online service, a free phone service operated by trained cessation counselors, text support, and a group program called QuitCore that will teach you how to quit and connect you with others who are also quitting.

For more information on supports available to help you quit, visit www.AlbertaQuits.ca or call 1-866-710-QUIT.