

Smoking and Back Pain

This fact sheet is for smokers with back pain. It explains why it is important to stop now and describes effective help that is available on the NHS.

Why stop smoking?

Smokers lose an average of eight years of life unless they stop. They also suffer from diseases of old age for more of their lives. The earlier you stop, the less the damage but stopping at any age makes a difference.

Smokers suffer more from back pain. The reason is not clear but new evidence shows that stopping smoking can lead to improvements.

It is thought that smoking reduces the blood supply to the discs between the vertebrae and this may lead to degeneration of these discs.

Why get help with stopping?

Stopping smoking can be very difficult. This is because of the way that nicotine acts on the brain: it rewards you when you smoke and produces unpleasant symptoms when you try to stop.

If you try to stop without help, your chances of success are about 1 in 20.



What help is available?

Camquit Stop Smoking Service can help you stop smoking in a variety of ways:

1. Stop smoking groups

These run for seven weeks, usually in the evening. The session usually lasts for about an hour and a half. The success rate for people who want to stop smoking in a group is very high - up to 80%.

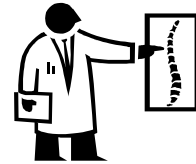
2. One-to-one appointments

You can call our freephone number or look at our website for the nearest clinics to you. See details below.

3. Consult a 'Community Stop Smoking Advisor'

Community advisors are practice nurses, pharmacists or other health professionals who are trained to support smokers wanting to stop. You see the advisor once a week starting one or two weeks before the quit date, and carry on for four weeks after it. Sessions typically last 15-30 minutes. NRT, Zyban or Champix is usually prescribed.

Call Camquit and join the telephone counselling call back service. They will send you an NRT voucher to redeem at your local pharmacist and support you over a six-week period at times that are suitable to you. The call back service is available extended hours from 9:00am to 8:00pm Monday to Friday and from 10:00am to 6:00pm at weekends.



What you should know when trying to stop

You may have to try many times before you succeed. The important thing is to keep trying and to use effective treatments each time. Think of it like doing the lottery, but with a much higher chance of winning!

You may get a cough just after you have stopped. This is normal and does not last long.

Smokers often think that smoking helps with stress but it actually makes it worse - your stress levels will go down if you stop smoking completely.

It can help if you make your home completely smoke free.

Consult your doctor or stop smoking advisor for advice and support to help you become smoke free!

Contact your local GP or

CAMQUIT on

0800 018 4304 or

www.camquit.nhs.uk

Or text KICKBUTT to

80010

NHS

Cambridgeshire