

### BC Quit Program: What's Covered

#### What is Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRT)?

NRT helps reduce cravings by giving your body small, safe doses of nicotine, without the harmful chemicals found in cigarettes.

Eligible BC residents can get help to quit smoking through **PharmaCare's Smoking Cessation Program**.



You can receive:

- **12 weeks of free Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRT)** per year:
  - Patches ▫ Gum ▫ Lozenges
- **12 weeks of free prescription medication:**
  - Bupropion or varenicline
  - Coverage depends on your PharmaCare plan.
  - In some cases, the benefits of using medication to quit smoking may outweigh the risks in pregnancy.



### How to Access Support

Getting started is easy:

- **Bring your BC Services Card (MSP)** to any pharmacy.
- A pharmacist will help fill out the form — **no prescription needed for NRT**.
- **3 x 28-day supplies** for 12 weeks.
- To get medications, talk to your doctor or pharmacist
  - The prescription must say **“smoking cessation”**.
- **Ask your pharmacist** what's best for you during pregnancy.



### QuitNow BC

- Free programs, coaching, text support

### Talk Tobacco

- Offers coaching, support, and information for **First Nations, Metis, Inuit and urban Indigenous individuals**
- Coaching available via the phone, live chat, text and an online forum

### The alcohol and drug information and referral service

- Provides **free, confidential, multilingual**, information and referral about community resources in BC for people dealing with **substance use and addiction concerns**.
- Resource navigators provide information about detox, counselling, treatment programs, recovery homes, and support groups.
- **Telephone assistance** is available 9 am to 5 pm Monday to Friday

### QuitSTART app

- Tips and information to prepare you for becoming smoke free
- **Monitor your progress** and earn badges for smoke free milestones and other achievement

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# Smoking in Pregnancy

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## What is addiction?

- Cigarettes contain **nicotine**, the **main chemical that causes addiction**.
- It triggers chemicals in the brain that **make you feel good**, making you crave more
- Over time, **your brain gets used to nicotine**. When you stop, you may feel **withdrawal symptoms** like irritability, anxiety, or have trouble sleeping or focusing
- **Quitting is hard**, but support and treatment can help.

## Why Quit During Pregnancy?

Smoking during pregnancy is one of the **biggest preventable causes of health problems and death** for babies before and after they're born.



## Health Benefits of Quitting

- **48 hours:** The risk of a heart attack starts to decrease
- **Days:** Breathing becomes easier
- **1 year:** The risk of a heart attack decreases by 50%
- **5 years:** The risk of a heart attack returns to normal
- **10 years:** Lung cancer decreases by 50%
- **Wound healing is improved**
- **The risk of developing cancer decreases**
- **Quit early, stay smoke-free for longer**



## You & Your Baby Are Affected

### How does smoking affect you?

- Increases your risk of having a **heart attack or stroke**.
- Predisposes you to **lung problems, such as pneumonia, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), and sinus infections**.
- Increases your risk of **cancers, including breast, cervical, and lung**.
- Can make it **more difficult to get pregnant or have a successful pregnancy**.
- May **cause problems during childbirth, like heavy bleeding**.
- **Delays wound healing** after C-section



### How does smoking affect your baby?

- **Premature birth**
- **Low birth weight**
- **Stillbirth**
- Sudden infant death syndrome (**SIDS**)
- Can cause **developmental delays** in children
- Can cause **behavioural disorders**
  - Attention-deficit disorders
  - Intellectual disability
- **Respiratory problems**
- Childhood **cancers**
- Increases the risk of **obesity**
- **Nicotine dependence**
- Increases the risk of **cross-eyes** (strabismus)



## Methods to Quit

- **Find your reason:**
  - Write it down
- **Choose a quit date**
- **List your triggers**
- **List healthy distractions**
- **Build your support system:**
  - talk to your family, friends, and health-care providers
- **Be kind to yourself**



## Support for Pregnancy



**QuitNow** offers **free, confidential services** tailored to your needs:

- **Coaching** to manage cravings and build a quit plan
  - **Information** on how smoking affects you and your baby
  - **Tips** to help your partner or support system be involved
- You're not alone — support is here whenever you need it.**