

## SMOKING CESSATION

Everyone knows the health and financial reasons to quit smoking but that is easier said than done. Nicotine is one of the most addictive substances available and anyone who has tried to quit will attest to that.

There are many methods advertised to help smokers quit: the patch, nicotine gum, medication, hypnosis, Emotional Freedom Technique (EFT), support groups, etc. But how does a smoker determine what treatment will be effective? The answer is “some of everything”.

The smoker (like any other addiction) will not give up nicotine successfully unless the behavior (smoking) is replaced with healthy alternatives. As the Alcoholics Anonymous saying goes, “people, places and things” that trigger the urge to smoke have to be avoided. Also, similar to many other addictions, nicotine may have been used initially to relax or cope with stressful situations. Therefore, good stress management skills must be developed as well.

A successful smoking cessation plan will include counseling to learn new coping skills, creating “to do list” to select from when a craving hits, hypnosis sessions (not just one!), support from family/friends/ex-smokers, and for some people, the patch or other short-term medication that eases cravings and irritability. In selecting a therapist to work with, a smoker should look for one who is experienced in treating addiction. Of course, it is always advisable to speak with one’s physician before undertaking any plan.

The good news is that smokers can quit and their health can improve. Their bank accounts will become healthier, too! So, stop procrastinating and get the help you need to quit. Your body and your checkbook will thank you.