



COPING WITHOUT SMOKING

Information for Patients and Families Mental Health Programs

Grey Nuns Community Hospital & Misericordia Community Hospital

What has changed?

New policies and laws regarding smoking in public places have been enforced to create a safer environment for the public, workers, visitors, as well as for those who smoke tobacco products. The policy of this facility/hospital dictates that smoking is not allowed on the property. If you smoke, this change may have significant impact for you during your time as a patient in this facility. There are several options available to help in coping and managing any withdrawal symptoms.

Is this a concern for me?

If you use tobacco products such as cigarettes, cigars, pipes or chewing tobacco, you will likely experience some physical and/or psychological cravings during prolonged periods between uses. These cravings can be effectively controlled by the use of Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRT). Gum, patches, inhalers, and medications are all examples of safe and effective methods. How much nicotine you currently use will determine the type and amount of NRT you may require.

What am I expected to do?

If you smoke, it will be beneficial to assess your current patterns to determine if NRT is needed, your doctor or nurse can help you assess this. The goal is not to create 'non-smokers' but to help in managing the discomfort experienced by withdrawal symptoms, (creation of any non-smokers will be welcomed). Verbally or physically abusive behavior, secondary to withdrawal is unacceptable and effectively managed with NRT.

Some help please?

While in hospital, the following may be of assistance to you:

- Nicotine Replacement Therapy
- Information (knowledge of the impact smoking has on you personally)
- Supports available to develop and enhance your own coping skills:
 - Individual counseling (staff members)

What's next?

If you decide, or are currently planning for a more permanent reduction or stoppage of your tobacco use, assistance and support is also available following your discharge from hospital.

Reduction or stoppage of tobacco use of any duration is considered successful, and all efforts should be commended. Research shows that for the majority of individuals, repeated attempts are expected before total abstinence is achieved.

Resources:

- Nursing staff
- Pharmacists
- Physicians
- Community support groups ie: AADAC
- Self-assessment tools to help guide and reinforce your decision to quit.
- Friends and family members
- Tobacco Reduction pamphlet

Tobacco and Nicotine Facts:

- Nicotine is the addictive component of tobacco, but is not known to cause cancer.
- Combustion (burning) of a cigarette creates 4000 harmful chemicals
- Nicotine replacement therapies are safer than smoking for persons with cardiac or respiratory disorders
- Smoking while using the patch does not induce heart attacks
- NRT can be used to 'cut-down' as well as totally quit smoking
- 'Forced' abstinence does not result in permanently quitting

Addiction facts:

- Combined therapies are the most effective method of treating addictions
- Open honest communication with others leads to more effective treatment
- Increased knowledge of addictive substance can lead to greater self-confidence and empowerment for positive change
- Success can be small and/or gradual changes
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Where can you get more information?

- Ask your doctor or nurse
- Call Health Link 780-408-5465