

## SMART ABOUT SMOKING

**-SMOKING** is the #1 risk factor for heart and blood vessel disease. It is a primary cause of blockages in the blood vessels that supply the heart, head and legs causing heart attacks, strokes, and leg pains (referred to as claudication). It also can cause irregular heartbeats and even sudden death.

**-MEDICATIONS** can *double* a smoker's chance of successfully quitting. The medications approved by the FDA that help you quit include: nicotine patch, nicotine gum, nicotine lozenges, nicotine inhaler, nicotine nasal spray, Bupropion (also called Wellbutrin), and Varenicline (also called Chantix).

Talk to your nurse about which medication or combination is right for you. Keep in mind that only 6% of those who try to quit cold turkey without a medication succeed.

**A-ACCEPT** that this is an addiction and overcoming it is a long, hard process.

Smokers need to look at the 3 parts of their addiction:

1. Physical: "if I don't have a cigarette, I feel irritable, anxious, and feel physical cravings for a cigarette."
2. Behavioural: "I always enjoy one after a meal, with coffee, or taking a break at work."
3. Psychological: "Cigarettes are my best friend. They are dependable and reliable and help me get through anything."

**R-RECOGNIZE** your own triggers or times you are most likely to smoke: after meals, 1<sup>st</sup> thing in the morning, at a party where others are smoking, while having a drink or when you are feeling nervous or angry.

**T-TAKE the TIME:** Be patient with yourself. Lifelong habits are hard to change. And your body may crave nicotine for several months. Becoming smoke free is much more than "just not smoking". It's letting go. Remember:

**"YOU HAVEN'T FAILED UNTIL YOU QUIT TRYING"**