

# Smoking cessation

Although great progress has been made on reducing smoking rates over past decades, smoking remains one of the most important preventable causes of morbidity and mortality in the Australian population. There is good evidence that opportunistic intervention by GPs can substantially increase abstinence rates and deliver significant public health benefits. However, there are a number of known barriers to initiating a discussion about smoking cessation. GP registrars need to develop an efficient and effective approach to this topic, including understanding the range of pharmacological interventions available.

<b>TEACHING AND LEARNING AREAS</b> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contribution of smoking to ill-health and smoking-related general practice presentations</li> <li>• Barriers to GPs asking about smoking cessation</li> <li>• The '5 A's' approach to smoking cessation – ask, advise, assess, assist, arrange</li> <li>• Indicators of nicotine dependence</li> <li>• <a href="#">Stages of change and brief intervention</a></li> <li>• Non-pharmacological options for management</li> <li>• <a href="#">Pharmacotherapy</a> (NRT, varenicline, bupropion), including indications, SEs</li> <li>• <a href="#">Nicotine vaping and e-cigarettes</a></li> <li>• Approach to specific groups e.g. pregnancy, mental health</li> </ul>	
<b>PRE- SESSION ACTIVITIES</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2014 AFP article <a href="#">Tobacco smoking: options to help patients quit</a></li> </ul>	
<b>TEACHING TIPS AND TRAPS</b> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Most smokers actually want to quit</li> <li>• Smoking cessation is not easy – it may take a long time and multiple attempts</li> <li>• Always be encouraging and non-critical of relapses</li> <li>• Don't discount NRT as an effective treatment option</li> <li>• Use varenicline with caution in patients with significant psychiatric or psychological disorders and CV disease</li> <li>• Phone the Quitline with the registrar and talk to the counselor about their approach</li> <li>• From 1 October 2021, a prescription is required to legally access nicotine containing e-cigarette products for any purpose. This includes importing these products from overseas.</li> </ul>	
<b>RESOURCES</b> 	<b>Read</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2019 RACGP Guidelines – <a href="#">Supporting Smoking Cessation</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">NPS article - Stop smoking – what works for your patients?</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Quitline</a> – 137 848</li> </ul>
<b>FOLLOW UP/ EXTENSION ACTIVITIES</b> 	<b>Watch</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TED Talk – Judson Brewer – <a href="#">A simple guide to break a bad habit</a></li> </ul>
	<b>Listen</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2019 MJA podcast <a href="#">Targeted anti-smoking efforts</a></li> <li>• Radio National podcast – <a href="#">Science vs e-cigarettes</a></li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Registrar to answer true/false questions and discuss with supervisor</li> <li>• Find out the cost of cigarettes, NRT and e-cigarettes</li> <li>• Ask the registrar to conduct a mini audit of a day's patients for documentation and accuracy of smoking status</li> </ul>	

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## Clinical Reasoning Challenge

1. The current rate of smoking is higher in women than men in Australia. True or False?
2. Aboriginal people smoke at twice the rate of non-Aboriginal Australians. True or False?
3. Smoking cessation advice must be at least 3 minutes in duration to be effective. True or False?
4. The majority of smokers are interested in quitting. True or False?
5. Smoking less than 15 cigarettes a day suggests the patient is not nicotine dependent. True or False?
6. More than one form of NRT can be used concurrentl. True or False?
7. NRT is available on the PBS. True or False?

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## ANSWERS

1. The current rate of smoking is higher in women than men in Australia. True.
2. Aboriginal people smoke at twice the rate of non-Aboriginal Australians. True.
3. Smoking cessation advice must be at least 3 minutes in duration to be effective. False.
4. The majority of smokers are interested in quitting. True.
5. Smoking less than 15 cigarettes a day suggests the patient is not nicotine dependent. False.
6. More than one form of NRT can be used concurrentl. True.
7. NRT is available on the PBS. True.