

## Reducing Harm & Finding Help, Continued

on nicotine slowly. Nicotine chewing gum can provide something to put in your mouth, like a cigarette.

There are medications that a doctor can prescribe to help you stop smoking. Bupropion (often known as Zyban) and varenicline (often known as Chantix) can reduce withdrawal symptoms and cravings. Therapy can also help you recover from nicotine addiction. A counselor can help you



develop a personal plan designed specifically for you. Peer groups such as Nicotine Anonymous and online forums can provide support and a community with similar goals.

Recovery apps specific to nicotine addiction can be downloaded to your smartphone that provide information, tools, and connections to community support.

# Tobacco



## Information about Your Health



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## Tobacco Products – What Are They?

Tobacco is a leafy plant that contains the chemical nicotine. People use a wide variety of products that contain nicotine, most of which are made from tobacco. Cigarettes, cigars, and chewing tobacco are all tobacco products that contain nicotine. The liquid used in electronic cigarettes typically contains nicotine, too.

In most of the United States, you must be at least 18 years old to purchase tobacco products. In some areas, the legal age is 21.

## Tobacco & My Health

### Shorter term

Tobacco products can cause symptoms on a daily basis. Smokers may have scratchy, uncomfortable throats, a cough and extra mucus, bad breath, and congestion (stuffy, painful nose). Tobacco use can make you more likely to get colds, sinus infections, and pneumonia.



of throat cancer. The carbon monoxide in tobacco smoke increases your chance of heart diseases.

Secondhand smoke (breathing smoke from someone else's tobacco product) can cause nonsmokers to develop the same health problems that smokers do. Children, elderly adults, people with existing health problems, and pets are especially likely to be harmed by secondhand smoke.

### Longer term

*Addiction:* Because they contain nicotine, tobacco products have addictive potential. Not everyone who uses tobacco products becomes addicted, but some do. People who stop using tobacco products may experience withdrawal symptoms such as irritability, anxiety, and strong cravings.

*Other health issues:* The tar in cigarettes, even those marked low tar or light, increases your chance of lung cancer and chronic breathing problems. Chewing tobacco increases your chance

## Reducing Harm & Finding Help

Cutting back on tobacco products can improve your health. Quitting smoking can be hard, but the health benefits begin as soon as you stop and continue to grow as time passes.

A number of nicotine replacement therapy products can be bought at drug stores or with the guidance of your doctor, including chewing gum, skin patches, inhalators, and sprays. These tools give you a steady dose of nicotine so you can avoid cravings and cut back

