

The Benefits of Quitting Tobacco for Your Spine Health

Think about why you want to quit.

Maybe you want to protect your heart and your health to live longer. Maybe you want to be a good role model for your kids. Maybe you just want to spend your money on something besides tobacco and nicotine products. Your reason for wanting to quit is important. If your reason comes from you—and not someone else—it will be easier for you to try to quit for good.

Why should I quit?

It doesn't matter how long you have been a smoker. Quitting can help improve your health. Quitting smoking can:

- Lower the risk to your spine. It has been proven that smoking contributes to disc breakdown and arthritis of the spine
- Make it safer for you to have surgery
- Make your recovery from injury and surgery faster and easier. Smokers have 5-7 times more health problems than non-smokers after surgery
- Improve your bone health. Smoking can weaken your bones (osteoporosis), which raises your risk of bone breaks
- Lower your risk of having a stroke
- Lower your risk of serious illnesses and death
- Limit dangers of second hand smoke to family and friends

We know quitting smoking is hard.

Some people who quit say that it was the hardest thing they have ever done, but many people like you have been able to quit smoking. Ask your family, friends, and doctor to help you, because you don't have to do it alone. It is important to get the support and resources you need to help you quit for good.

I'm ready to quit. Now what?

Make a plan, set a date and get ready.

- If you need help making a plan, call the Maine Tobacco Helpline at 1-800-207-1230
 - Get support from your family and friends
 - Talk about medicine options with your primary care doctor
 - Think about program support like counseling or stop smoking groups
 - Reward yourself for your successes!
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Resources:

MaineHealth-Maine Medical Center: Go to Mainehealth.org and browse by Topic: Smoking Cessation

Maine Tobacco Hotline: Call 1-800-207-1230

American Lung Association: Go to lungusa.org/tobacco

Maine Medical

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Neurosurgery & Spine

A department of Maine Medical Center

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