

# Smoking, Tobacco, and Your Health

## Self-Management Plan

- If you smoke, talk with your healthcare team for support in quitting.
- Avoid second-hand smoke. There is no risk-free level of secondhand smoke.
- Avoid vaping and use of chewing tobacco.

### Green Flags—All Clear

### What this means ...



#### If you have:

- Do not smoke tobacco or vape (use e-cigarettes)
- Are not exposed to second-hand smoke

- Good work!

Keep up the great work!

### Yellow Flags—Caution

### What this means ...



#### If you:

- Smoke or vape and are exposed to second-hand smoke
- Use chewing tobacco
- Have a cough that will not go away
- Frequently have a sore throat
- Wheeze
- Experience shortness of breath
- Have lasting chest pains
- Notice a change in your voice pattern
- Experience Joint and skeletal pains
- Have stomach pains or heartburn
- Have difficulty swallowing
- Have a sore on your tongue or in your mouth

- You may develop lung problems due to smoking or vaping.
- You could develop cancer of the mouth or esophagus.

**Call your health care provider if symptoms do not improve.**

**Name:**

**Number:**

**Instructions:**

**If you notice a Yellow Flag, work closely with your health care team.**

### Red Flags—Stop and Think

### What this means ...



#### If you have:

- Have a high fever
- Notice bloody discharge when you cough
- Extreme shortness of breath
- Chest pain

- You need to be evaluated by a health care professional immediately.

**Notify your health care provider's office. You may be instructed to go to urgent care.**

**Name:**

**Number:**

**Follow these instructions:**

**If you notice a Red Flag, follow-up with health care provider.**

# Smoking, Tobacco Use, Exposure & Respiratory Health Fast Facts

- Smoking irritates your nose and throat. Smoking damages the tiny hairs found in your airways so they cannot do their job protecting your body. It damages your cardiovascular system and, if you have diabetes, you are two to four times more likely to develop heart disease or stroke.
- Smoking causes cancer, heart disease, stroke, and lung diseases (emphysema, bronchitis, and chronic airway obstruction). It affects the immune system, increasing the risk of respiratory and other infections. It also increases your chance of developing a stomach ulcer.
- Nicotine raises your blood sugar so it may be more difficult to keep your blood sugar in control.
- Smoking reduces oxygen flow in your body, so your lungs age faster.
- Smoking is the leading preventable cause of death in the country and smoking related diseases cause about 443,000 lives each year in the U.S.
- Cigarette smoke contains over 4,800 chemicals, 69 of which are known to cause cancer. Second-hand smoke contains more than 70 cancer-causing chemical compounds, 11 of which are known to be Group 1 carcinogens—meaning the agent can cause or aggravate cancer. The carcinogens in tobacco smoke damage important genes that control the growth of cells, causing them to grow abnormally or to reproduce too rapidly.
- It's estimated that one trillion cigarette filters, filled with toxic chemicals from tobacco smoke go into our environment as discarded waste yearly.
- Nicotine reaches the brain within 10 seconds after smoke is inhaled. It has been found in every part of the body.
- There is no safe level of smoking, vaping, or use of chewing tobacco. Even those low-intensity smokers are at increased risk of health complications and earlier death.

## What can you do?

- Take your life back! If you smoke, get help to quit. Do not give up on the hope of quitting. You are worth the effort!
- Talk with your health care provider about treatment options.
- Call 1-800-QUIT-NOW (1-800-784-8669).
- Call or visit your health plan website. All plans in the Health Insurance Marketplace are required to cover tobacco cessation treatment, though specific coverage varies by plan. Some things covered include tobacco counseling, nicotine replacement therapy, and related medications with no out-of-pocket costs. Some plans use an in-network approved health provider and pharmacy.
- If you have Medicare Part B (medical insurance), it covers eight face-to-face visits in a 12-month period. The visits must be provided by a qualified doctor or other Medicare-recognized practitioner.
- If you have a Medicare Advantage care plan, call or visit your health plan website.

## Aging and Disability Services

Aging and Disability Services (ADS)—the Area Agency on Aging for King County—plans, coordinates, and advocates for comprehensive services for older adults, family caregivers, and people with disabilities throughout Seattle and King County. For information about services or interpretation assistance, call 844-348-5464 or e-mail [info@communitylivingconnections.org](mailto:info@communitylivingconnections.org).



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