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OUTLINE

Managing Without Tobacco

Knowledge Topic references are located in a separate section of the Baby Steps Help Guide e-resource.

Participant handout references are not included, but are available upon request by contacting the tru@ahs.ca.

Goal	To support participants in the action stage of quitting tobacco by preparing them for the changes that will occur in their body.
Objectives	<p>By the end of the learning session, participants will</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. understand the changes tobacco users experience when they quit 2. be able to identify strategies to cope with the signs of recovery/withdrawal
Presentation approach	<p>As a one-to-one service provider or group facilitator, decide how you will share information with, and support reflection by, participants. You may wish to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • print and hand out the participant resources • share the participant resources using a laptop, tablet or cell phone • visit the websites and links with participants to point out where they can find additional information • engage in large or small discussion groups (if in a group setting) • have participants write down what they have learned on the handout sheets provided, or share their learning verbally
Facilitator/ service provider backgrounders	<p>There are two facilitator background documents, one facilitator activity instruction sheet and three participant resources for you to review as preparation on this topic:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Managing Without Tobacco</i> 2. <i>Managing Recovery</i> (facilitator activity instructions) 3. <i>Signs of Recovery</i> (activity pieces) <p>The appendices on “Girls, Women, Health and Tobacco Use” and “Using a Principle-Based Approach” may also be helpful to review.</p>
Participant Resources	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Signs of Recovery</i> (handout) 2. <i>I’m Getting Better</i> (handout) 3. <i>Nicotine Withdrawal and Coping Strategies</i> (Tobacco Cessation Toolkit) (optional)* <p>*This resource was designed for health providers to use as a tool for conversation with clients. Share it with your clients cautiously. Consider: What education level are they at? Is English their first language? Would they benefit more from discussing withdrawal and coping symptoms only?</p>

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FACILITATOR BACKGROUNDER Managing Without Tobacco

Planning to stop using tobacco is a big step! While it is the best choice your client can make to improve their health, it is often a scary one. Questions that many people worry about include “Will I have terrible cravings?” “What will they feel like?” And “What if I can’t manage them?”

Having a plan to manage things that clients wonder or worry about, like withdrawal symptoms, is important as they get ready to quit and will help them feel more in control, especially if they understand what to expect.

Psychological and Physiological Effects of Nicotine^[1]

- 1) When someone smokes, they take in more than 7,000 chemicals contained in the tobacco, including nicotine. Many of these chemicals increase the potency or effect of nicotine, and strengthen its addictiveness.
- 2) Next, nicotine moves to the lungs, where it is absorbed into the bloodstream.
- 3) The heart then pumps the nicotine throughout the person’s body, including the brain.
- 4) It only takes 10 seconds for nicotine to reach the brain.
- 5) The release of dopamine in the brain causes the high and euphoria, which enhance nicotine’s addictive effect.
- 6) Repeated exposure to nicotine leads to the development of a tolerance, and larger doses of tobacco are then required to produce the same stimulating effects.
- 7) When an adequate dose of nicotine isn’t maintained, the person using tobacco will experience symptoms of withdrawal.



People who use tobacco normally use enough to maintain a constant level of nicotine in their blood, but when that level drops they will experience withdrawal symptoms. Signs and symptoms of nicotine withdrawal normally appear within two hours of the person’s last nicotine use, peak in 24–48 hours and last from several days to four weeks. The intensity of a person’s withdrawal symptoms can affect the success of their quit attempt.

After stopping tobacco, it will take a while for the body to get used to being without it. For some, it may take up to 12 weeks to get rid of most of the signs that most people refer to as withdrawal. In fact, these symptoms are the body working to repair itself from the effects of tobacco, and are really signs of recovery. Others symptoms, like cravings, can last even longer.



Breaking the Reinforcing Nature of Tobacco Dependence

The nicotine taken in from tobacco products is highly addictive. It is fast-acting and provides the brain with a sense of pleasure within seconds. However, this effect does not last long, so you need to use tobacco again to get more nicotine to maintain the feeling. When you become tobacco-free, the first few days are often tough, as your body misses that feeling of pleasure it has come to depend on. As the levels of nicotine diminish, the body’s recovery process produces symptoms that can be uncomfortable, which most often result in feelings of stress. Some of these symptoms may be related to the reaction between nicotine and other substances (e.g., food, medication). It is important for clients to understand this and have strategies for managing symptoms in place before they quit.

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FACILITATOR BACKGROUNDER Managing Without Tobacco

Common Withdrawal Symptoms^[2,3]

Withdrawal symptoms are sometimes called recovery symptoms because the body is adjusting to living without nicotine and the many toxins found in tobacco.

Examples of common withdrawal symptoms include

- increased appetite
- weight gain
- insomnia, sleeping problems, waking at night
- anxiety, nervousness
- restlessness
- depressed mood
- desire, craving
- anger, irritability, frustration
- difficulty concentrating

When a woman is pregnant, it is recommended that she first try to quit tobacco using strategies to change her behaviour. Understanding when she uses tobacco and how she feels when she uses it are important steps to changing the routines associated with her use. For example, does she use tobacco without thinking about it? Tobacco may be a part of her daily routine.

Have each client ask herself the following questions before she reaches for tobacco:

- Can I do without it?
- Do I really even want it?
- Can I wait for it, or do something else?



Prepare a list of strategies ahead of time to help her manage her temptations to use tobacco. Here is one to consider:

The 4 Ds

1. Delay: wait out the urge to use tobacco. The strong urge to use tobacco only lasts about three minutes. You might want to time a few cravings to know how long they typically last.
2. Deep breathe: A deep breath relieves some of the urge to use tobacco, as it mimics inhaling and fills the lungs with oxygen. It will make you feel better.
3. Drink: Drink lots of water, instead of alcohol or drinks with caffeine.
4. Do: Do something else to take your mind off the urge to use tobacco.

If attempts to change her behaviour are not successful, or she finds she craves tobacco too much, medication like nicotine replacement therapy (NRT) and prescription medications can relieve nicotine cravings and withdrawal symptoms for people who smoke heavily (10 or more cigarettes per day). Not only that, but it can double her chances of success! If your client feels that she may need to use medication to quit tobacco, have her speak to her prescribing health provider about NRTs to see if they are right for her during pregnancy or postpartum.

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FACILITATOR ACTIVITY INSTRUCTIONS

Managing Recovery

Materials:

- Grab bag or hat
- Pens and pencils
- Approximately five recipe cards per participant
- One photocopy of the Facilitator Backgrounder sheet Managing Without Tobacco
- Flipchart or other recording method
- Photocopied Participant Handouts for each person
- Audio of any relaxation recording (optional)

1. Cut up the photocopy of Signs of Recovery (table format) so that each section has one sign on it. Place these in a hat or bag and pass it around to participants. Ask each participant to pick a sign from the hat and read it out loud to the group.
2. Pass out five recipe cards to each participant. These will be participants' "self-care cards."
3. Next, discuss each sign and have participants brainstorm ideas on how to cope with them.

Use the background information sheet Signs of Recovery to add ideas to the discussion. Record the participants' responses on the flip chart.

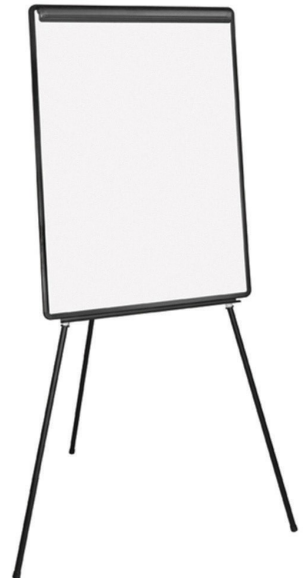
4. As each sign is discussed, encourage participants to make their self-care cards. If a sign is mentioned that a participant feels is relevant to them, have them write the name of this sign on the top of the card. Then have them write on the rest of the card what they can do to cope with it.

Encourage participants to use these cards and continue identifying signs and recording ideas. These ideas could include:

- activities (e.g., taking a walk)
- information to clarify what is happening in their body (e.g., coughing means that their lungs are cleaning themselves)
- positive self-talk (e.g., "I am strong," "I know this craving will pass shortly")

For those in the group who do not use tobacco, they could make up a card for a friend who does. They could also identify whether they are having difficulty with things like stress, anxiety or tiredness related to other aspects of their lives, and if so, make up a self-care card for those issues. These techniques for looking after ourselves can apply to anyone.

5. Review the 4 Ds with the participants as seen on the Participant Handout.



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ACTIVITY PIECES
Signs of Recovery

I need tobacco now!	I feel restless and have more energy
I can't get to sleep	I am coughing more
I'm sleepy all the time	I'm having difficulty going to the bathroom
I'm putting on weight	I'm always clearing my throat and my nose keeps running
I feel cranky	I just feel negative all the time
I have trouble concentrating	I'm tense and edgy
I feel dizzy	I don't know what to do with my hands
I am hungrier	I have bad breath

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PARTICIPANT HANDOUT

Signs of Recovery



Anger

Anger is part of the process. Don't try to resist it. You don't have to have a reason to be angry—you just are. Accept it and vent it safely and harmlessly. Deal with the irritating situation by dealing with your feelings rather than suppressing them. Say what's on your mind without blowing your stack.

Anger expressed in a way that is not constructive; like losing your temper or bottling up your feelings creates tension, which creates the need for tobacco. Talk about your anger with a friend. Take a walk. Do deep-breathing exercises.

Bad breath

Brush your teeth more often. Drink lots of water. Your lungs need time to clean themselves as they begin to remove the deposits of tar inside them.

Boredom

Try new things. Keep your hands and mind busy. Write a letter, do dishes, cook, paint, do carpentry, knit, garden or sew. Run some errands, get caught up on jobs you haven't had time to do or go see a movie. If you have to stay in one place, have a book, crossword puzzles or deck of cards handy. The habits and activities associated with using tobacco can take a long time to break. They are learned behaviours that have been practiced many times per day. They need to be replaced with something else. Practice the 4 Ds.

Constipation, gas, stomach pain

As your body continues to recover and remove the poisons from your system, your digestive system may slow down and stop moving food through the intestines for a brief time. You may experience these symptoms for one or two weeks after quitting. The best thing to do is drink plenty of water. You need 8 to 12 glasses per day for good health. Eat healthy meals and snacks that include fiber like fresh vegetables and fruits, and whole-grain breads and cereals.

Cough, dry throat/mouth

This is another good sign of recovery. Your body is getting rid of mucus, which has blocked airways and restricted your breathing when you were smoking. It will likely last for just a few days after quitting. Try sipping on ice water, and drink plenty of liquids (especially water). To keep your mouth and throat moist, you can chew sugarless gum or suck on a straw or sugarless hard candies.

Cravings

Nicotine is a strongly addictive drug that your body is used to having every time you use tobacco. Now the body misses that nicotine and is urging you to use tobacco again to get it back. Cravings are most intense during the first two or three days. Occasionally, cravings can occur for a month and for some people even longer. To beat a craving, wait it out. Remind yourself that you are in command of your body and that the craving will go away in a few minutes. To help combat the cravings, stay active, keep your mind busy and sip slowly on a cool glass of water.



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PARTICIPANT HANDOUT

Signs of Recovery

Depression

It's normal to feel angry or confused in the first few weeks of being tobacco-free. These feelings will pass. Find a substitute reward instead of tobacco use. Deal with your emotions. Call your support person. Use positive self-talk. Instead of cutting yourself down, build yourself up and tell yourself that you're doing a good job. Don't allow a self-defeatist attitude (e.g., "I'm no good," "I can't do this"), as this can lead to a decreased sense of control and a drop in your self-esteem. Think about success, not failure!

Dizziness

Now that you are tobacco-free, your body is receiving extra oxygen. This can make you feel dizzy. Feelings of dizziness should pass in one or two days. If you're feeling dizzy, get some fresh air and go for a walk. If you are sitting or lying down, change positions slowly so you don't lose your balance.

Fatigue

Nicotine is a stimulant that was keeping you going while you were using tobacco. Now that you are tobacco-free, your body is no longer reacting to the nicotine and you feel tired.

Tiredness may last two to four weeks. Get extra sleep and more exercise, take naps and don't push yourself. If you feel tired when you first wake up, do some light activities and take a cool shower. Drink 8 to 12 glasses of water per day to speed up the healing process.

Feeling cooped up

Have a good long stretch. Then take a short walk.

Frustration

Take a walk. Do some deep breathing. Blow off some steam by getting physical! Talk to your support buddy. Think of positive reasons for quitting and the rewards you will be able to achieve. Take some time by yourself. Do a favourite hobby.

Happiness

Look for ways to celebrate being happy that don't include tobacco.

Headaches

Take a warm bath or shower. Try relaxation or meditation techniques. Do more physical activities. Cut down or eliminate coffee and cola drinks.

Food cravings

Craving for tobacco can be confused with hunger pangs or a simple craving to have something in your mouth. For years, your mouth was stimulated every time you used tobacco. This has now been removed. These cravings may last for several weeks. To help you get past the cravings, drink water or suck on a straw. Be prepared. Have healthy snacks on hand, including vegetables and fruit, and air-popped popcorn. Keep your mouth busy. Chew sugarless gum.



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PARTICIPANT HANDOUT

Signs of Recovery

Irritability, grouchiness, tension

Your body is craving nicotine. People who quit tobacco are in a chronic state of nervous stimulation. Many of the symptoms people experience are the result of the nervous system returning to normal. These feelings may last for one to two weeks. When they hit, do some deep breathing, take a walk, be active, use relaxation exercises and cut down or stop caffeine from coffee, tea, chocolate and cola drinks.

Lack of concentration

When you become tobacco-free, your body needs time to adjust to not having constant stimulation from nicotine. As you recover, you will find your concentration improving after the first week. Try changing up your daily activities often and do less at a time. Get some fresh air, stay active, deep breathe, listen to music, watch TV, do more physical activity and cut down or stop caffeine from coffee, tea, cola drinks and chocolate.



Lack of sleep

Nicotine affects your brain-wave functions. This can change how we sleep. Dreams about tobacco are common. The feeling of not being able to sleep usually only lasts about a week. Treat yourself to a warm, relaxing bath. Avoid caffeine from coffee, tea, cola drinks and chocolate. Try relaxing at bedtime with a glass of warm milk, deep breathing and relaxation techniques. Work on a hobby.

Loneliness

Many people see their cigarette as a close friend. You may also realize that many of your friends use tobacco, and it's harder to be around them now. Call a friend who doesn't use tobacco. Go for a walk or a drive.

Restlessness

The habits or activities associated with using tobacco can take a long time to break. They are learned behaviours that have been practiced many times per day. They need to be replaced with something else. Work on a hobby. Catch up on your chores. Be active.

Tightness in the chest

This is probably due to tension created by the body's need for nicotine, but it may also be caused by sore muscles from coughing. Remember that coughing is part of the recovery process, as the lungs start to remove mucus and tar and clean themselves. The tightness will only last for a few days. Try deep breathing and relaxation exercises, and be patient. Soon your body will return to a new normal.

The 4 Ds

The 4 Ds is a strategy for coping with nicotine cravings. It is easy to do and some ideas can be used at almost any time or location. For example, Delay or Deep Breathing could be done while driving a vehicle.

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PARTICIPANT HANDOUT

Signs of Recovery

Delay

When the urge to use tobacco hits, don't give in to it, but delay. Wait five minutes each time and the urge will pass.

Deep breathe

Start by sitting down and closing your eyes. Allow your body to relax and let your head fall. Drop your shoulders, then loosen the back of your neck. Close your mouth and breathe in as slowly and deeply as you can through your nose. Hold your breath and count to four, then slowly exhale until there is no more air in your lungs. Repeat this five times.

Drink water

Make this into a ritual. Start by finding the glass and getting it out. Pour the water into the glass. Sip the water slowly and feel it in your mouth. Hold the water briefly in your mouth and then swallow.



Do something else

This works best if you have a list of things ready to go when the urge to use tobacco hits. Check your list and pick out an activity you can do instead. By doing something else, you are distracting yourself and taking your mind off the urge to use tobacco.

Additional Supports

AlbertaQuits.ca offers information tabs on managing withdrawal, conquering cravings, avoiding weight gain, getting active and managing stress:

An external site on [signs of withdrawal symptoms and recovery](#) may be useful.

An external site called Pregnets offers ideas for mothers to [cope with cues or triggers](#).

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PARTICIPANT HANDOUT

I'm Getting Better

After you stop using tobacco, it will take a while for your body to get used to being without it. Usually, your body will need at least 12 weeks to get rid of most of the signs called withdrawal, which are really signs of recovery. Some withdrawal symptoms, like cravings for tobacco, may last longer. The habits or activities associated with using tobacco can take a long time to break. They are learned behaviours that have been practiced many times per day. They need to be replaced with something else. Try to look at this positively as your body gets used to being without tobacco and gets healthier and stronger.

Your body shows it is recovering as it learns to function without nicotine. Nicotine is a powerful drug that can make you feel excited, especially in a boring situation. It can make you feel focused when you are stressed. You associate feeling relaxed with using tobacco and it can even make your memory and concentration better. These are very strong feelings and are part of the reason why you become addicted to nicotine in the first place. You continue to use tobacco to get these feelings. When you stop, your mind misses these feelings and you get the urge to use tobacco again. This is why nicotine addiction can be hard to break. But it's not impossible.

Your body goes through other changes as it learns to work properly without the damaging effects of tar and other chemicals from tobacco. For example, up until now, tobacco smoke has prevented the little hairs inside your lungs from sweeping out tar and other harmful deposits from your lungs. When you stop smoking, they start to work again. This can make you cough. You may cough more than when you smoked. You might even mistakenly think that quitting has made you sick. This will go away once your lungs work better. Your body may react in other ways, too. You may feel dizzy, be constipated or have trouble sleeping.

Every person has their own signs of withdrawal. Remember that these symptoms only last a short time, and will go away as your body heals itself and recovers from using tobacco. And remember that withdrawal signs are really signs of recovery. Help your body recover by treating yourself well. If cravings for tobacco are too hard to handle, you may need to get nicotine from another medical product like nicotine replacement therapy (NRT), including gum,

patches, mouth spray, lozenges or inhalers. These products help you gradually reduce the nicotine in your body but without the other dangerous chemicals found in tobacco products and tobacco smoke. Talk to your doctor or pharmacist about the potential risks and benefits of using NRT while you are pregnant or breastfeeding. You will still need to work on other ways to stay tobacco-free if you are using them.



Review your reasons for becoming tobacco-free and write them on a card to keep with you. When you are feeling signs of recovery, practice the 4 Ds and re-read your reasons for quitting. You and everyone around you will benefit from your choice to be tobacco-free.