



# GPs Assisting Smokers Program



The five A's is an evidence based framework which has been developed and evaluated for smoking cessation in health care settings.

## ASK

**Identify and document smoking status routinely and review at least every 12 months**  
- current, ex, or never smoker

## ASSESS

**a. Interest in quitting; b. Identify barriers to quitting** eg *what would be the hardest thing about quitting?*; **c. Level of nicotine dependence** i. Time to first cigarette in the morning (< 30 mins) -ii. Number smoked per day (>15 cigarettes) iii. Previous symptoms of withdrawal  
**d. Explore motivation and confidence e. Explore barriers to quitting f. Quitting history** eg *what worked? What didn't work? What tipped them back?* **g. High risk situations** i. *Which cigarette would be the hardest to give up?* ii. When might 'slips' occur – even one puff greatly increases the risk of relapse

## ADVISE

**a. Provide brief, clear personalized and non-judgmental advice to quit**  
**b. Set quit date**  
**c. Address the three main domains** Dependence Habit Triggers (especially negative emotions) **d. Brainstorm solutions** eg provide options, explore what is likely to support their ability to quit. **e. Negotiate/advise how to deal with high risk situations**

## ASSIST

**a. Offer a Quitbook and give the Quitline number 131 848 b. Negotiate a separate smoking cessation orientated consultation**  
**c. Enrol in Quit 12 week call back program d. Discuss/offer pharmacotherapy e. Develop a plan to deal with:** nicotine withdrawal, habit, negative moods weight gain, stress, high risk situations

## ARRANGE

**a. Follow up (ideally in first 7 days)**

**b. Recruit support eg partner, family**

< 1 minute

1 – 5 minute

**REMEMBER:** the unsupported quit rate is ~ 3%, this can be improved 8 fold with 2-3 visits of 10-15 minutes



# Benefits of Quitting



Time	Benefit
20 minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Blood pressure drops to normal</li> <li>• Pulse rate drops to normal</li> <li>• Body temperature of hands and feet increases to normal</li> </ul>
2 hours	All nicotine is out of your system
8 hours	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Carbon Monoxide level in blood drops to normal</li> <li>• Oxygen level in blood increases to normal</li> </ul>
24 hours	Chance of heart attack decreases
2 days	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Taste buds start to respond</li> <li>• Sense of smell starts to improve</li> <li>• Nerve endings start regrowing</li> </ul>
7 days	Maximal withdrawal symptoms
21 days	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exercising is easier</li> <li>• More air gets to the lungs</li> <li>• Body needs less oxygen</li> </ul>
28 days	Withdrawal symptoms have stopped
2 months	Circulation to hands and feet improve
1 to 9 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cilia (hair like cleaning system) begin to recover &amp; remove mucus from you lungs</li> <li>• Body's overall energy increases</li> <li>• Coughing, sinus congestion, fatigue and shortness of breath decreases</li> </ul>
12 months	Excess risk of heart attack is half that of a smoker

## Symptoms Of Quitting

### Symptom Effect On Body Coping Strategy

#### Craving

Intense desire to smoke declines over 4 weeks  
Consider: pharmacotherapy, brief distractions eg 4D's-

- drink water
- deep breathe
- do something else
- delay the urge to smoke

ring the Quitline 131848

#### Coughing

Worse initially; body cleaning the respiratory tract  
Settles after first 2-3 weeks

#### Hunger

Possibly intense, may persist  
Start regular exercise program; eat sensibly, but no serious dieting until a less stressful period.  
Moderate alcohol consumption

#### Bowel upsets

Possibly constipation or diarrhoea  
Settles over 2-3 weeks