




King Hussein Cancer Center



# QUITTING SMOKING AFTER A CANCER DIAGNOSIS



If you or your loved one has been diagnosed with cancer, quitting smoking will be very important for improving your response to treatment and recovery. This brochure provides options to quit smoking.

 There are risks if you continue to smoke and benefits if you quit, regardless of the type of cancer you have or what stage it is.

## **WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF QUITTING BEFORE SURGERY?**

The earlier you quit before surgery, the sooner your body can heal. Quitting smoking reduces your risk of wound problems and post-surgical infections.

After surgery, patients who smoke may suffer from a delay in wound healing and an increase in many complications, such as infection and wound rupture. This is because wound healing occurs at the cellular level within the body's tissues, and oxygen is the basis for this process. However smoking deprives the body of the much-needed oxygen required to repair and build cells.

Patients who smoke are more commonly found to have longer hospital stays after having surgery.

## **WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF QUITTING BEFORE CHEMOTHERAPY?**

Studies have shown that smoking while receiving chemotherapy increases the medication's unwanted side effects. By quitting smoking, you will have fewer side effects such as:

- fatigue
- weight loss
- weakening of the muscles
- and problems with the heart and lungs

Because smoking reduces the oxygen in the blood, the amount of treatment (drug) carried by the blood and absorbed by the body is reduced as well. As a result, chemotherapy becomes less effective making slower progress in treatment, and creating longer periods of recovery.

- ✔ Continued smoking puts patients at risk of their first cancer coming back, or developing a new cancer.

## WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF QUITTING BEFORE RADIOTHERAPY?

By quitting smoking, your body will have higher levels of oxygen. This will ultimately increase your response to radiotherapy treatment.

You will have a better appetite and a sense of taste and smell. Since smoking can cause loss of appetite, which is also a side effect of radiotherapy, quitting will help you maintain your recommended weight.

Patients who smoke during radiotherapy treatment may experience infections, respiratory complications, in addition to longer hospital stays.

- ✔ Studies show that patients who quit smoking are more likely to recover from cancer than patients who continue to smoke.

## HOW CAN QUITTING IMPROVE MY QUALITY OF LIFE?

Quitting smoking plays a key role in cancer patients' treatment and in prolonging their life. That is true even for late stage patients.



## Quitting smoking after a cancer diagnosis:



Decreases the need for help to improve breathing after surgery



Helps the heart and lungs work better



Improves sleep and patients have more energy



Helps people feel better and less stressed



Improves self-esteem and helps people feel more in control of their lives



Improves the overall effectiveness of cancer treatments

 No matter how old you are or how long you have smoked, quitting will help you improve your prognosis.

## WHY IS QUITTING SO DIFFICULT?

Quitting smoking is a process and will not happen overnight, because of your addiction to nicotine.

Nicotine from tobacco is addictive because it reaches the brain very quickly, where it attaches to receptors and prompts chemicals to be released in the brain. When the nicotine effect wears off, smokers usually feel stressed and go back to their tobacco use. The symptoms that take place when nicotine's effect wears off are called withdrawal symptoms (your body's response to not having nicotine).

## REACHING OUT FOR HELP TO QUIT

With help from a specialist, patients can avoid common mistakes that can get in the way of their quitting.



 Counseling makes it easier for you to quit smoking.

Specialists at KHCC's Tobacco Dependence Treatment Clinic counsel patients on the best method to quit smoking. However, to give yourself the best chance to quit, you must commit to this goal. It may take more than one try to quit smoking completely. Remember to always be honest with your doctor about your daily tobacco use. This will guarantee that you are receiving the right treatment and the proper care you need.

In addition to counseling, the clinic also offers nicotine-replacement therapy which contain nicotine in smaller amounts than those found in tobacco products, and without all the other toxic chemicals in tobacco products.

Nicotine-replacement therapy come in different forms:

- Nicotine patch
- Nicotine inhaler
- Nicotine nasal spray
- Nicotine gum
- Nicotine lozenge

 Tobacco dependence treatment medications can increase your chance of quitting.

Nicotine-replacement therapy lessens the symptoms of nicotine withdrawal and cravings to smoke. It gives your body less and less amounts of nicotine until you no longer need it.

The clinic provides the following non-nicotine medicines:

- Bupropion (Zyban™)
- Varenicline (Champix™)

 For effective use of these medications, you should consult a Tobacco Treatment Specialist.

## ABOUT US

KHCC's Tobacco Dependence Treatment Clinic is equipped with a certified team of Tobacco Treatment Specialists, and offers individualized treatment plans for patients. Treatment plans include smoking cessation consultation and counseling, medications and follow-up care.

For further assistance, please call:  
**06-5300460 ext. 4086, or 077-844-4517.**

You can visit our website here for more information:  
**<http://www.khcc.jo/section/khccs-tdt-clinic>**

**TOBACCO DEPENDENCE TREATMENT CLINIC,  
KING HUSSEIN CANCER CENTER**

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