

# LET'S TALK TOBACCO

A guide to harm reduction  
during and after pregnancy



Adapted with permission  
from Alberta Health Services.



**Alberta Health  
Services**

  
**York Region**



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# TOBACCO AND TOBACCO-LIKE PRODUCTS

Tobacco products include anything sold as tobacco:



**Tobacco-like products act like tobacco.** These include electronic cigarettes (e-cigarettes), hookah and cannabis (marijuana) that's smoked or vaped. It doesn't include nicotine replacement products such as nicotine gum or patches.



## WHAT SHOULD I KNOW ABOUT TOBACCO?

It's best to stop using tobacco before you become pregnant; however, any time you stop while you're pregnant is better for your health—and what's good for you is good for your baby. The sooner you stop using tobacco and tobacco-like products, the better. It can be hard to quit. This workbook will help guide your steps.

Most women know that tobacco isn't good for them or their baby. Stay away from areas where there's smoke or vapour while you're pregnant and after your baby's born. Make your home and vehicles 'clean air' zones—free from smoke and vapour. We don't know as much about the harm tobacco-like products cause women and their unborn baby, but there are things that we do know:

- **The nicotine in tobacco is addictive and isn't safe for pregnant women and unborn babies.** Nicotine is the addictive drug found in tobacco and some tobacco-like products. An unborn baby exposed to nicotine in tobacco can have serious health problems when they're born or when they're older
- **Cigarettes have harmful and cancer-causing chemicals in them and the health effects of e-cigarettes are unknown.** E-cigarettes aren't as harmful as cigarettes, but they're still not safe. Health Canada has not approved them as an aid to stop using tobacco
- **There's no safe amount of tobacco or cannabis for pregnant girls or women.** Just because something's grown naturally doesn't mean it's good for you or that it can't hurt you. Cannabis smoke has many of the same cancer-causing chemicals as tobacco smoke. Maternal cannabis use has been linked to effects on children's brain development, behaviour and mental health

Until more information about the possible harms of using cannabis is available, it is recommended that women stop using it while they are pregnant, or while breastfeeding.

Medicinal cannabis can be prescribed by a doctor in special cases. A doctor can help you to decide if the benefits are greater than the risks. It is unsafe to use any medicines while pregnant or breastfeeding that are not recommended by a health care provider. This includes cannabis. Talk to your health care provider about safer choices that do not risk harming your baby.

People who get any type of professional help to quit (e.g. telephone, group, or one-on-one) are much more likely to stop for good.

**For confidential support to reduce and quit using tobacco, go to [smokershelpline.ca](http://smokershelpline.ca)**



# WHAT ARE FOUR GOOD REASONS I SHOULD STOP?

## 1. You're worth it!

You may have been encouraged to quit for the baby. Look at it a different way. Think about the rewards for your health and your happiness. These benefits will keep you motivated to stay tobacco-free long after your baby is born. You deserve a life without the bad health effects tobacco and tobacco-like products cause. If you can become tobacco-free, your baby and family will benefit too!

## 2. The benefits for you

### **When you stop using tobacco:**

- You'll save money (and be able to use it to buy things for your baby and you)
- Your heart and lungs will be healthier; they already work extra hard during pregnancy
- Things will taste better and smell better
- You'll likely have a healthier pregnancy, a better chance for a safer delivery and a healthier baby
- You'll reduce your risk of cancer
- You, your home and your vehicle will smell cleaner and fresher
- You'll be a great role model for your child

### 3. The benefits for your baby

**When you stop using tobacco before you're pregnant or when you're pregnant:**

- You give your baby a healthier start and a healthier home to grow up in
- Your baby has a better chance of being born at a healthy weight (a smaller baby doesn't mean an easier labour and birth)
- Your baby has a better chance of being born full-term (babies born too early often have trouble breathing at birth)
- Your baby will be at less risk for SIDS (Sudden Infant Death Syndrome), breathing problems like asthma, ear infections, behaviour problems, learning problems and ADHD (Attention Deficit-Hyperactivity Disorder)

**The benefits most important to me are:**

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### 4. The benefits to your body

**There are all kinds of benefits when you stop using tobacco. Within:**

- 20 minutes, your blood pressure drops to normal
- 12 hours, the oxygen level in your blood goes up to normal
- Two weeks to three months, your blood circulation improves
- One year, your risk of heart disease is cut in half
- Five years, your risk of a stroke and cervical cancer can go down to that of a non-smoker
- 10 years, your risk of dying from lung cancer is cut in half
- 15 years, your risk of heart disease is the same as a non-smoker

# GETTING READY TO CHANGE

## What are the good and not-so-good things about using tobacco?

Sometimes pregnancies aren't planned, which means that the idea of quitting tobacco can happen suddenly. You may not be sure you're ready to quit, even knowing you're pregnant.

Use the space below to think about and list the good and the not-so-good things about using tobacco.

A. THE REASONS I USE TOBACCO	B. MY CONCERNS ABOUT USING TOBACCO
C. WHAT I WILL GAIN FROM STOPPING	D. WHAT MIGHT BLOCK MY PROGRESS

- A. Replace the reasons **why you use** with a healthier choice. What can you do instead?
- B. **Your concerns** are your reasons for quitting. The more concerns you have the more it will motivate you to quit for good.
- C. What you **gain from stopping** helps make sure you stay tobacco-free. Have a plan in place when you experience something that could **block your progress**. You might need more than one idea.
- D. You may have to adjust your strategies along the way. Sometimes you just have to keep trying!

Everyone has their own reasons for wanting to make a change—  
what are yours?

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## WHY DO I USE?

When you understand why and when you use tobacco (your triggers), you have a better chance of making a change that lasts. Keeping track of when you use tobacco is an important step in making a change.

**Use the Tobacco Tracker in this workbook or make your own.**

When you've filled it in, look at how many times you used tobacco when you really didn't need to. Look for feelings, people, or places that trigger or tempt you to want to use tobacco.

TOBACCO TRACKER			
Used Tobacco	Date/Time	Craving 1 - weak 5 - strong	What I was feeling or doing
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			

Which times were the hardest for you not to use tobacco? If you decide to cut down before you quit, it might help to do the easier ones first—leave the hardest ones for last.

## Plan how you'll handle these times. You could:

- Change your routine
- Stay away from the things that make you want to use
- Find ways to deal with cravings, such as taking a walk after dinner instead of lighting up a cigarette
- Think about ways to make using tobacco less appealing (such as buying a brand you like less, putting tobacco in a place that's harder or takes more work to get to)
- The best plan for change is the one that helps you change the behaviours connected to using tobacco

<b>IF YOU USE TOBACCO WHEN YOU FEEL:</b>	<b>TRY DOING THIS:</b>
<b>Stressed or nervous</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Go for a walk</li><li>• Take a break</li><li>• Remind yourself of what you do well</li></ul>
<b>Bored or lonely</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Talk to a friend</li><li>• Plan a baby project</li><li>• Do something you enjoy</li><li>• Listen to music</li></ul>
<b>Angry or upset</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Write about your feelings</li><li>• Go for a walk</li><li>• Talk to a friend</li></ul>

'Managing Cravings' is covered on page 19.



## COMMON CONCERNS

### I'm afraid I'll gain weight

It's normal to gain weight when you're pregnant. A healthy weight gain means your baby is growing and developing.

- Babies born to women who don't use tobacco are healthier and have fewer problems with the stress of being born
- A healthy weight gain gets your body ready for breastfeeding

Some women are afraid to stop smoking because they don't want to gain more than their pregnancy weight. Smoking is worse for your health than the average 4.5 kg (10 pounds) of weight people gain after stopping. Gaining some weight is normal for anyone who quits smoking. It's often temporary and there are things you can do to manage it.

## Why people tend to gain weight after they stop using tobacco

Some people find that their sense of taste and smell are better, which means that they enjoy food more and may tend to eat more.

### Things to keep in mind:

- Eat at least three balanced meals a day. Balanced meals have at least three to four food groups from *Canada's Food Guide*
- Eat more whole, unprocessed foods, as they make you feel full longer (for example, have an apple instead of a can of soda, or whole grain bread instead of white)
- Listen to your body—stop eating when you don't feel hungry anymore
- Don't use food to satisfy a craving or to replace having a cigarette in your hand or mouth. For example, drink water or chew on sugar-free gum. If you want to keep your hands busy, use a squeeze toy, colour, or keep an elastic band on your wrist to keep your hands busy. See page 19 for more ideas to manage cravings

Your health care provider will tell you how much weight to gain during your pregnancy. If you're worried about your weight, talk to your health care provider. **These tips may help:**

- Don't quit during the holidays or special events like a birthday; you're likely to eat more at these times
- Talk to your health care provider about safe ways to be more active during your pregnancy. Walking is a great exercise. Find an exercise partner or a walking group to stay active and fit
- If you do gain weight, remember why you quit and think about the positive changes you may already notice

Eating healthy and being more active can help manage your weight and improve your health. Remember, feeling good and staying positive about your health is much more important than reaching your ideal weight.

**For more information and additional nutrition resources, visit [york.ca/nutrition](http://york.ca/nutrition) or [unlockfood.ca](http://unlockfood.ca). Speak to a registered dietitian at no cost by calling Telehealth Ontario at 1-866-797-0000.**

## I'm not sure it's safe to quit when I'm pregnant

Quitting is the very best thing you can do for your health and your baby's health. When you inhale smoke, the oxygen in your blood is replaced by carbon monoxide (a poisonous gas). This means that you and your baby aren't getting the oxygen you need.

You may have heard that stopping tobacco use is stressful for you or your baby. This is **not** true. Although many people say using tobacco calms them down or reduces their stress, it actually does the opposite. Using tobacco makes your heart rate and blood pressure go up. These are all symptoms of stress, which isn't good for you or your baby.

### **Below are some tips to help you deal with stress:**

- Think ahead about how you'll deal with stress when it happens
- Make time for the things that help you relax
- List things that help you relax, like talking with a friend who supports you, having a warm drink, or deep breathing
- Talk to someone you trust that can help you deal with the challenges
- Ask your health care provider for help if you aren't sure how to manage stress
- Eat well and stay active. Ask your health care provider how to do this safely
- Get enough sleep



**To learn more  
about health  
during pregnancy,  
visit [york.ca/prenatal](http://york.ca/prenatal)**

## Second- and third-hand smoke

Second-hand smoke is the tobacco smoke that is in the air and is bad for you and your baby. Vapour in the air from e-cigarettes is also harmful. Both have chemicals that aren't safe for anyone to breathe, including pets.

Many of the chemicals in tobacco smoke, vapour and tobacco-like products are poisonous or cause cancer. Some cause more harm than others; for example, although vapour from e-cigarettes may be less harmful than cigarette smoke, it's still not good for you or your baby.

Wherever there's second-hand smoke, there's third-hand smoke. Third-hand smoke is the chemical residue from smoking or vaporizing tobacco and tobacco-like products that clings to your hair, your clothes and anything else it touches. It stays there long after the smoke clears from the air. Babies are more at risk from third-hand smoke because they breathe faster, crawl on the carpet or floors, explore things with their hands and put things into their mouths.

### **Here are some tips to reduce second- and third-hand smoke in your environment:**

- Make your home and vehicles tobacco-free (no smoking, no vaping)
- Put 'clean air' signs in your home and vehicles to remind others of your new healthy choice
- Cover your clothes and hair when you (or anyone else) go outside to smoke or vape
- Take off anything that covered your clothes and hair (e.g. coat, scarf or hat) before you come in and leave them outside. Wash your hands and face to remove chemical residue before holding your baby
- Wash clothes, toys, bedding and other fabrics when you make your home tobacco free
- Paint walls and wash surfaces to remove residue
- Think about replacing belongings that are hard to clean



## I'm not sure how to tell my family and friends

Deciding to stop using tobacco can be scary and hard, especially if your friends and family still smoke or vape around you. Quitting doesn't mean you're giving up time with your friends and family who use tobacco, but it may mean that you'll need to change the way you spend time with them.

- Tell your family and friends who use tobacco that you want to have a healthy environment for you and your family, especially clean air. Tell family or friends who visit your home to smoke or vape outside away from fresh air intake vents and windows
- If you're visiting family or friends who smoke or vape, ask if you can meet them at smoke and vape-free places
- If you're all outside, ask them to move away from you and your baby when they smoke or vape. More public indoor, and some outdoor spaces, are including a wider ban on products that are heated, vapourized or smoked

If your partner smokes or vapes, he or she can still support you. If it's possible, ask your partner to try quitting with you. If your partner isn't ready to quit, ask for his or her support to keep tobacco use outside and avoid tempting you. Taking small steps towards a healthier environment are important. Each small step can lead to more healthy changes later on. Keep up the good work!

If your partner becomes upset with you because you want to cut down or stop using tobacco or if you don't feel safe asking your partner to stop with you, it's okay not to bring it up. Your safety is most important. Try to stay away from second-hand smoke wherever you can. **If you are experiencing abuse or feel you are at risk of experiencing abuse, call the Assaulted Women's Helpline for confidential advice at 1-866-863-0511.**

## I'm afraid I'm going to fail

Slipping back to using tobacco can happen. You may feel like you've undone all your hard work and progress. If you slip-up, you can still stop yourself from slipping even more. Expect to make a few mistakes along the way—it doesn't mean it's over! Just stop and reset your plan for change.

### How you can learn from the slips:

- Look at your slip; why do you think it happened?
- Look at your plan; does something need adjusting? Sometimes it takes more than one strategy to manage a tough situation
- Remind yourself what your concerns were about using tobacco and how things would be better if you stopped
- Give yourself credit for your progress. Focus on the positives and encourage yourself to keep up the good work
- If you take medicine to help you stop smoking, does it need adjusting? If you think it does, speak with your doctor or pharmacist
- Be kind to yourself! You're learning a new way to live without tobacco. Every time you try to stop, you'll learn something new about yourself and what works for you. Every time you make a change, think about what you learned and how you're another step closer to success! Think about asking for some help from a health care provider

Quitting is a process—it doesn't happen overnight. Every small step you take to make a change moves you one step closer to quitting for good! Celebrate your big successes, no matter how little they may seem to others. Try to reward yourself.

“The only real failure in life  
is the failure to try”

- Charles R. Swindoll

Look at it from how your baby might see it. What would your baby tell you about stopping? What would your future-self tell you about staying tobacco-free? Keep this as a note to read when you need motivation.

**What would your baby tell you is good reason for becoming tobacco-free?**

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## Tobacco is like a ‘friend’ I don’t want to let go

Replacing the space tobacco holds in your life can feel sad—it can feel like losing a friend. As part of any change, you’ll need to find something healthier to fill the space tobacco had in your routines, activities, your relationships and how you coped with life. Like any big change we make in our lives, it’s going to feel strange working towards a tobacco-free lifestyle. It will start to feel more normal over time. One day it will feel normal to not use tobacco.



# WITHDRAWAL: WHAT CAN I EXPECT WHEN I STOP USING TOBACCO?

Nicotine is the strong, addictive drug in tobacco. Your body becomes addicted to nicotine, no matter what way you use tobacco. Your body wants you to keep using because it wants the drug, nicotine. When you make the choice to cut back or quit smoking, for example, your body and brain need time to adjust to this change. This adjustment is called *nicotine withdrawal* or *recovery*. Some people avoid quitting tobacco because of the withdrawal symptoms.

Symptoms can start as soon as 30 minutes after you last used tobacco. Other symptoms will happen three to four days after you last use (such as having more gas, bloating or being constipated).

**Most symptoms disappear within a month. Not everyone has the same symptoms:**

- About seven out of 10 people have cravings or feel hungrier
- About six out of 10 people have trouble concentrating
- About one out of 10 people will have trouble sleeping

## Tips to manage withdrawal symptoms

IF YOU:	TRY DOING THIS:
<b>Have a cough/ sore throat</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Use cough drops</li><li>• Sip warm, decaffeinated tea</li></ul>
<b>Feel grumpy or irritable</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Let others know what you're going through</li><li>• Be easy on yourself</li><li>• Try to lighten your workload</li><li>• Go for a walk</li><li>• Don't eat or drink things with caffeine in them</li></ul>

<b>IF YOU:</b>	<b>TRY DOING THIS:</b>
<b>Are hungrier than usual</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Eat low-fat snacks like veggies or fruit</li> <li>• Drink water</li> <li>• Suck on a hard candy</li> </ul>
<b>Feel dizzy/have a headache</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Get fresh air</li> <li>• Try to limit activity, be safe when you feel dizzy</li> <li>• Take a rest break if you can</li> </ul>
<b>Have a short attention span</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Take a walk</li> <li>• Work for short periods instead of long ones</li> <li>• Get lots of sleep</li> </ul>
<b>Are constipated</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Eat more fruit, vegetables, and bran cereal</li> <li>• Drink enough water to keep your urine (pee) pale</li> </ul>
<b>Feel restless</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Go for a walk</li> <li>• Keep your hands busy</li> <li>• Don't eat or drink things with caffeine in them</li> </ul>
<b>Are having trouble sleeping or staying asleep</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Don't eat or drink things with caffeine in them</li> <li>• Go to bed when you're tired</li> <li>• Get up and read or do something you enjoy until you feel sleepy</li> </ul>

When you're pregnant and/or when you're cutting back on smoking, your body changes how it breaks down caffeine. Caffeine is broken down much more slowly after you quit smoking. This means you may feel jittery, anxious, or have other symptoms related to using caffeine. Talk to your health care provider like a pharmacist or doctor to learn more.



## MANAGING CRAVINGS

When you have a craving for tobacco or food, remember that cravings usually last only a few minutes. Do something else to keep yourself busy during this time. You'll find that the longer you go without using tobacco or tobacco-like products, the less often you'll have cravings and the weaker they'll become. Have a plan ready to help you work through a craving. Think about ways that will work best for you. Adjust your plan as you find ways that work and drop the ones that don't.

### Strategies when I feel like using tobacco or tobacco-like products

**Below are some ideas to help as you work towards a life with no tobacco:**

- Get plenty of sleep if you find it gives you more energy
- If you enjoy holding a cigarette, replace it with something that will keep your hands busy (e.g. an elastic on your wrist, a fidget spinner, knitting, scrapbook, crossword puzzles or doodling)

- If it helps you relax, take a bath or shower, listen to soothing music, write in a journal, go for a walk, clean something or call or text a friend
- If you like smoking with your friends, spend time with them in non-smoking places instead (you can also think about spending more time with friends that don't smoke or use tobacco)
- If you use tobacco when you feel stressed, find other activities to replace it with (such as taking a walk, talking to a friend, doing a crossword puzzle or cleaning your space) or try deep breathing
- If tobacco is part of your culture, think about smudging with sweet grass, sage or cedar
- If you have an urge to eat or keep your mouth busy, try chewing on a toothpick, coffee stir stick or chew sugar-free gum
- If you crave something sweet, eat a piece of fruit, sugar-free gum or candy

**Try the “4 Ds” when you’re having a craving:**

- **Drink** lots of water
- **Do deep** breathing exercises
- **Delay** the urge to use tobacco (try to get through the next five minutes)
- **Do** something else to take your mind off the craving

**My strategies to manage cravings are...**

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

If you have concerns about any symptoms or changes related to quitting or reducing smoking call Smokers’ Helpline at 1-877-513-5333. If you find you’re feeling depressed, speak with your health care provider or call 310-COPE.



## MY FIRST CHANGE ATTEMPT

### Try counselling and willpower alone first

You may choose to quit by cutting down or just stopping all together. Either way, pregnant or breastfeeding women have a better chance of stopping when a health care provider supports them with a plan to change. Tobacco changes how some medicine works. If you take medicine, talk to your health care provider before you quit. Your doctor may choose to watch the medicine dosage you take while you cut down or after you've quit.

### Cutting down

If you aren't ready to stop using tobacco quite yet, or would like to reduce your cravings when you do quit, try cutting down first. Start by smoking one or two fewer cigarettes per day and see how you feel. You can do this just by putting off each craving by a few minutes. You'll find that putting off the craving by a few minutes each time isn't so bad—it may help you feel even more sure that you can quit. Every cigarette you don't have means less of the poisonous cancer-causing chemicals you and your baby are exposed to.

Smokers' Helpline has proven, free and personalized tools to help you quit successfully. You'll find information on tobacco support programs and self-help materials. **You can also visit [pregnets.org](https://www.pregnets.org) for information on cravings and stress.**

# JUST KEEP TRYING: WHEN COUNSELLING AND WILLPOWER ISN'T ENOUGH

If you're having trouble managing your withdrawal symptoms or cravings, you and your health care provider may decide that Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRT) can help. NRT is medicine that replaces some of the nicotine you get from tobacco.

NRTs still have nicotine in them, but they don't have all the harmful chemicals found in tobacco and tobacco-like products. You will also take in less nicotine from NRT than your tobacco product gives you. **Your health care provider may look at four forms of short-acting NRTs:**

1. Nicotine gum
2. Nicotine lozenges
3. Nicotine mouth spray
4. Nicotine inhaler

Research tells us that NRT helps break the cycle of tobacco use. It also protects the baby from the carbon monoxide, tar and many other chemicals (many linked to cancer) found in tobacco products.

**Always speak to your health care provider and pharmacist before starting NRT, especially if you're pregnant or breastfeeding.**

Your health care provider will answer your questions and help you decide which option for change is best for you.

## AFTER MY BABY ARRIVES

If you quit using tobacco while you were pregnant, what do you plan to do after your baby's born? When pregnant, many women make healthy changes to their lives, like eating more healthy food and not drinking alcohol or using tobacco. Once your baby's born, you may find a lot of changes happening in your life that make it hard to stay tobacco-free.

## **It may be harder to stay tobacco-free if you:**

- Stopped only because you were pregnant
- Feel you deserve a reward for staying tobacco-free while pregnant
- Find caring for your baby more stressful than you thought it would be
- Find yourself in old, familiar places with people or things that remind you of using tobacco

Going back to using tobacco may be tempting, especially if you enjoyed it. But think about it—you've made so much progress learning why you used and improving your health, don't give up now! If you stopped because you were pregnant and wanted you and your baby to be healthy, it's no different now that your baby's here. You still want what's best for your baby—and that means a clean air environment.

Remind yourself why you decided to quit for good in the first place. The best thing you can do for your health and your family's health is not to use tobacco or tobacco-like products.

Go back to page 8 to remind yourself again why you use tobacco and why you want to quit. Look at all the gains you've already made and the roadblocks you got through to stay tobacco-free. If you're still not sure, ask yourself what's changed and what hasn't? How can you get even more motivated? Make a plan and get help if you need it. You can do this! Sometimes you just have to keep trying.

**For more support, go to [smokershelpline.ca](http://smokershelpline.ca) or call 1-877-513-5333.**





## USING TOBACCO AND BREASTFEEDING

### Moms who don't use tobacco are more likely to:

- Breastfeed
- Breastfeed longer
- Produce enough breast milk
- Feel less stressed and have more energy because their babies settle well

### The babies of moms who don't use tobacco are more likely to:

- Sleep better
- Have a better appetite and spit up less

These are all good reasons to keep trying to quit tobacco!

### **Breastfeeding is always best, even if you're still using tobacco.**

Nicotine, the addictive drug in tobacco and NRT, passes into the breast milk and to your baby. If you still use tobacco and breastfeed, then the time you breastfeed is important if you want the nicotine to affect your baby less. Use tobacco after your baby's feeding is finished. This gives your body time to clear most of the nicotine from your breast milk before your baby's next feeding. It will also help your baby settle more easily after feeding.

Newborns may go through periods where they have many frequent feeds close together, called cluster feeding. This often happens in the evening.

When your baby has periods where he or she feeds more often, do your best to manage the stress and cravings without tobacco and never skip a feeding.

**Be prepared:** Expect that you'll feel stressed when you have a new baby. Think ahead and make a plan to manage your risk of using tobacco again (refer to page 19 for ways to manage cravings). For more support, speak with your health care provider or call Smokers' Helpline at 1-877-513-5333 to talk to a tobacco counsellor.

## THINK ABOUT SAFETY

Before your baby starts crawling, look around your home and vehicle to see where you keep your nicotine or tobacco products. Can your baby reach them? When you throw them away, can children or pets get them?

Tobacco, tobacco-like products (e.g. vapes) and NRT products have enough nicotine in them to make a child or animal sick. They can even cause death from poisoning. Children are curious; when they see adults use these products, they may try to copy them. Children (and pets) may swallow, inhale or absorb (through their skin) nicotine from these products.

- Keep them out of reach and hidden from view
- Make sure your partner and others who use tobacco, tobacco-like products or NRT know how to keep children and pets safe
- Watch for visitors who use tobacco, tobacco-like products or nicotine products
- Throw products away safely so that children or pets can't get to them

**For poisoning and drug information, call the Ontario Poison Centre at 1-800-268-9017 or go to [ontariopoisoncentre.ca](http://ontariopoisoncentre.ca)**

# LET'S REVIEW THE STEPS TO SUCCESS

1. Review your reasons for wanting to make a change (keep your list handy)
2. Remember that people who get any type of professional help (e.g., telephone, group or one-on-one) are more likely to stop for good
  - Sign up online at [smokershelpline.ca](http://smokershelpline.ca)
  - Think about joining an online group support program like [pregnets.org](http://pregnets.org)
  - Talk to your health care provider about NRT and/or other medicine if you think you may need it
  - Talk to your friends and family about your plan for change and how they can support you
3. Set your tobacco-free date and do your best to keep it
  - Choose a time and day to quit that you think will be the least stressful and the most successful
  - Recognize and learn how to reduce stress in the first few weeks of cutting down or stopping
4. Revisit your Tobacco Tracker on page 8 to review your reasons for using tobacco before you stop
  - Change your routine so that you're not tempted
  - Make a list of people who can support you
  - Make your home and vehicles tobacco-free

- Plan how you'll cope with others using tobacco and tobacco-like products around you
- Cut down to build your confidence, reduce harm and reduce your dependence on nicotine
- Replace tobacco with healthy options

## 5. Review and update your plan for change often as you move forward; you're learning about yourself and what works best for you

- Remind yourself how you'll deal with temptations (e.g. places, people and triggers) and manage slips (see page 15)
- Remind yourself that quitting is a process, not an event
- Go over your reasons for making this change
- Try new ways of doing things. Write down what works now and let go of what doesn't
- Get back on track right away
- If you feel stuck, talk to someone who is supportive and be open to their suggestions

## HOW CAN I LEARN MORE OR GET SUPPORT TO STOP?

For confidential support on how to stop using tobacco, go to [york.ca/tobacco](http://york.ca/tobacco) or call Smokers' Helpline at 1-877-513-5333.

**PUBLIC HEALTH**

1-877-464-9675

TTY 1-866-512-6228

**[york.ca/tobacco](http://york.ca/tobacco)**

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