



**NJWELL**  
Working for a  
Healthy New Jersey



# SUPPORTING A LOVED ONE IN QUITTING TOBACCO



**DON'T USE  
TOBACCO**



When someone takes the big step of deciding to quit smoking, family, friends, and co-workers can make a huge difference by giving their help and support.

Despite the difficulties in quitting, 40 percent of those who are successful attribute their successes to having support. Therefore, you play a greater role in your loved one's ability to quit than you might realize.

## General hints for friends and family



### Keep Perspective

- Remember a tobacco user's habit is hard to give up.
- Respect that the quitter is in charge. This is their lifestyle change and their challenge, not yours.
- Be patient and positive and don't give up on them.
- Understand mood changes are normal and usually improve within two weeks.
- Keep your faith in their ability to quit.



### Take Action

- Make your home tobacco free.
- Remove anything in the home that reminds them of using tobacco.
- Clean clothes, carpets, drapes and cars to help get rid of the tobacco smells.
- Help your friend or family member get what they need, such as hard candy to suck on, straws to chew on, and fresh veggies cut up and kept in the refrigerator.
- Spend time doing things to keep their mind off tobacco use.
- Help avoid situations or places that tobacco use could be likely.
- Provide assistance with your loved one's tasks and responsibilities to lower their stress level.



### Show Support

- Listen to what they have to say.
- Let the person know that it's OK to talk to you whenever they need to hear encouraging words.
- Ask the person whether they want you to ask regularly how they're doing or how they're feeling.
- Help them remember all the reasons they wanted to quit.
- Help them find healthy ways de-stress.
- Celebrate successes big and small. Recognize your friend or family member's tobacco free successes and milestones. Staying tobacco free for one day, one week, or one year are all reasons to celebrate.

**Avoid lecturing, judging, nagging, teasing, and offering unsolicited advice.**

# Reach out to your healthcare provider for any further questions on tobacco use, assistance with quitting, or supporting a family member or friend in their quit process.

## If your quitter relapses

Research shows that most people try to quit tobacco several times before they succeed. It's called a relapse when tobacco users go back to tobacco, like they were before they tried to quit. If a relapse happens, think of it as practice for the next time. Don't give up your efforts to encourage and support your loved one. If the person you care about fails to quit or starts using tobacco again:

**Praise them** for trying to quit, and for whatever length of time (days, weeks, or months) of not using tobacco.

**Remind** your loved one that they didn't fail – they are learning how to quit – and you're going to be there for them the next time and as many times as it takes.

**Encourage** them to try again. Don't say, "If you try again..." Say, "When you try again..." Studies show that most people who don't succeed in quitting are ready to try again in the near future.

**Encourage** them to learn from the attempt. Things a person learns from a failed attempt to quit may help them quit for good next time. It takes time and skills to learn to be a non-tobacco user.

**Don't scold, tease, nag, blame, or make the quitter feel guilty.** Be sure your loved one knows that you care about them whether or not they smoke.

**Say,** "It's normal to not succeed the first few times you try to quit. Most people know they have to try to quit again. You didn't use tobacco for (length of time) this time. Now you know you can do that much. You can get even further next time."

## If you are a tobacco user

- Only use tobacco outside and always away from the person attempting to quit.
- Keep your cigarettes, smokeless tobacco, lighters and matches out of sight. They might be triggers for your loved one to smoke.
- Don't ever offer them a smoke or any other form of tobacco, even as a joke!
- Join your loved one in their effort to quit. It's better for your health and might be easier to do with someone else who is trying to quit, too.



### Did You Know?

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) estimates that around 70 percent of smokers say they want to quit.

**YOU  
CAN  
DO  
THIS.  
THIS?  
DO  
CAN  
YOU**

Sources: American Cancer Society, Smokefree, Healthline, American Lung Association