

Help to Quit Smoking

Tobacco and nicotine addiction is a chronic disease and is the leading cause of preventable death and illness in Massachusetts and in the nation.

77% of adult smokers in Massachusetts report they want to quit and 60% try each year. In fact, when a smoking cessation benefit was added to MassHealth, over 40% of MassHealth smokers took advantage of it. However, many do not use proven methods that increase the odds of success. It's important to use medications and counseling together when trying to quit.

New research shows a direct link between the use of smoking cessation benefits and positive health outcomes—in just one year. MassHealth members who used the smoking cessation benefit had a:

- 46% decrease in hospitalizations for heart attacks, and a
- 49% drop in hospitalizations for other acute coronary heart disease diagnoses.

MTCP promotes proven steps and support to help people quit smoking for good.

To start, plan ahead.

- Pick a date to stop smoking as your quit date. Plan two to four weeks away.
- Use the time before your quit date to start making changes to your routine to help you handle withdrawal symptoms and triggers. Triggers are those certain times, places, people, or feelings that make you want to smoke.

Talk to your doctor and your health plan about quit-smoking medicines.

- Using quit-smoking medicines and counseling support together can triple your chances of quitting for good.
- Many medicines help with withdrawal symptoms and are not addictive. Some, like the nicotine patch or gum, are available over the counter without a prescription.
- Call your health insurance plan to ask if they cover the cost of medicine and counseling to help you stop smoking.
- For example, MassHealth covers FDA-approved stop-smoking medicines and counseling with a very low co-pay.

Call the [Massachusetts Smokers' Helpline](#) for free support and advice to help you quit.

- The Helpline provides free and confidential counseling over the phone in English and Spanish and translation for other languages.
- You can call Monday through Friday for confidential one-on-one support or to find out about in-person counseling sessions or stop-smoking groups in your area.

More Quit Smoking Resources:

- Visit MakeSmokingHistory.org for more about quitting, success stories from around the state, and to order a FREE quit smoking brochure.
- Find out if your [health insurance](#) covers quit-smoking medicines and counseling.

For Healthcare Providers:

Encouraging your patients to quit smoking is one of the most important things you can do as a healthcare professional.

- Refer patients to QuitWorks. [QuitWorks](#) is a free, evidence-based referral service that connects patients with phone-based counseling through the Massachusetts Smokers' Helpline to help them stop smoking.
- Find out more about how you can help your patients quit and stay quit at MakeSmokingHistory.org.

Related Links for more about Tobacco Use and Quitting:

[Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#)

[UMass Medical School – Center for Tobacco Treatment Research and Training](#)

[Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality](#)

[American Cancer Society](#)

[American Heart Association](#)

[American Lung Association](#)