

STOP SMOKING BEFORE SURGERY

Project update

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Patients need support to quit smoking for optimal surgical outcomes

Patients want the best possible surgical outcomes, so preparing for surgery can be considered a **teachable moment** and a time when patients are likely to be open to considering quitting smoking.

A pre-implementation survey of Northern patients who smoked and had surgery between December 2012 and March 2013 revealed many **surgery-related reasons** in response to the question:

“What helped or would have helped the most to stop smoking?”

Response Category	%
Willpower	26.6%
Using surgery as an opportunity to quit	18.1%
Using smoking cessation aids (e.g., NRT)	14.9%
Lower stress	9.6%
Getting support and information	8.5%
Higher price/lower access	6.4%
Threat of death/cancer	5.3%
Using strategies to avoid smoking	4.3%
Other strategies	6.4%

Some patients successfully quit smoking before their surgery:

“I quit smoking for 8 weeks knowing that my health should be in good condition for surgery”

Others **wished they had known** in advance of their surgery, and indicated that health care provider advice would have influenced them to consider quitting:

“Just before going to surgery, having the conversation of why it's bad for us. We all know it's bad for us ... but I guess adding those smoking complications with the surgery complications”

For many patients, surgery motivated them to consider quitting, but they needed more information and support:

“I understood that it would be easier for me for breathing if I didn't smoke, so I quit 5 days before my surgery”



SUPPORTING PATIENTS TO STAY SMOKE FREE FOR RECOVERY

For several patients, smoking cessation occurred post-surgery as a natural result of being hospitalized and unable to smoke following their surgery:

“I couldn't smoke and by the time I got home from the hospital it was 4 days and I didn't have a cigarette. So I thought why start again?”

Health care provider advice to stop smoking for optimal surgical outcomes will encourage patients to QUIT but patients need support to be SUCCESSFUL

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