

Who else can help me?

It is hard to stop smoking, but not impossible. Don't be discouraged if you have tried to quit before. It takes most people several attempts to quit before they can stop smoking for good. Many organizations offer information, counseling, and other services on how to quit as well as information on where to go for help.

Websites to visit:

wellnesspartner.org/tobacco

smokefree.gov

cancer.org

ffsonline.org

Other good resources include your doctor, nurse, dentist or pharmacist. Mercy's comprehensive Tobacco Cessation Program, Road to Freedom, utilizes many different techniques to help you manage stress and nicotine cravings including Auriculotherapy, mindfulness, relaxation techniques and Therapeutic Massage. A wellness coach will assist you in developing a personalized quit plan either in-person or by telephone. Call 820-9459 for more information about this highly-successful program that takes an integrative approach to helping you quit. Many insurances have a provision for tobacco cessation under preventative or wellness dollars. Please check with your insurance provider.



Mercy Hospital
1235 E. Cherokee
Springfield, MO 65804
mercy.net

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Smoking before surgery

Questions & Answers



Why should I stop smoking before surgery?

Smoking reduces the amount of oxygen available to the body and increases the amount of carbon monoxide inhaled. Your blood supply to the tissues carries less oxygen and nutrients and your immune system is less effective. This in turn can cause:

- Your surgical wounds to take longer to heal due to less oxygen and nutrients being available to the tissues.
- Your surgical wounds to become infected due to a decrease in your resistance to infections.
- Lung and chest infections after surgery due to increased secretions and decreased deep breathing.

How long should I stop smoking before surgery?

You should not smoke for 2 weeks before surgery. Some professionals even recommend that you stop smoking 6 weeks before surgery. It takes a couple of weeks for your lungs and immune system to start to function properly after quitting smoking. Don't get discouraged if you miss this deadline. It is still beneficial to stop any time before your surgery. If you just can't quit, you absolutely cannot smoke for 12 hours before surgery.

How long should I not smoke after surgery?

Ideally you should not smoke at all after surgery. Surgery is a great motivator to quit smoking. If you must smoke again try to wait for at least 4 weeks. There are certain areas of your body that can become infected for weeks to months following surgery, so smoking is not wise during this time.

Here are some helpful hints to help you quit your habit before surgery:

- Drink plenty of water.
- Avoid drinking alcohol. It lowers your chances of success.
- Stay away when others are smoking, since secondhand smoke is dangerous and can make you want to smoke.
- Don't let worry about weight gain distract you from your main goal of quitting smoking. Eat a healthy diet and stay active. Most people can lose the small amount of weight they gain after quitting smoking within several months.
- Chew sugarless gum or use sugar-free hard candy.
- Exercise or socialize to improve your mood instead of smoking cigarettes.
- Breathe deeply when you are faced with stressful situations. Relax.

- Most importantly, get support and encouragement from family and friends. Remember, they are there to help you quit.
- Don't use stress or 'bad mood' as an excuse to smoke.

Are there any medications to help me stop smoking?

Talk to your doctor or pharmacist about products you can try. These medications work best if you also talk to a professional in person or on the phone while you are using them. The products below all give you access to such a support system.

Over the counter:

- Nicotine patches
- Nicotine lozenges
- Nicotine gum
- Remember to stop these nicotine replacement products at least 12 hours before surgery!

Prescription only:

- Zyban (Bupropion)
- Chantix (Varenicline)