

The Oklahoma Tobacco Helpline's

5 KEYS TO PATIENT SUCCESS

Providers can play a huge role in helping their SoonerCare patients quit tobacco. The knowledge and tobacco cessation benefits you provide, combined with the valuable resources available through the Oklahoma Tobacco Helpline (OTH), can help patients find success on their journey to being tobacco free.

Encourage your patients to utilize [FREE OTH services](#), including free text and email support, phone and web coaching, and patches, gum or lozenges. SoonerCare patients may also receive additional tobacco cessation products, as well as counseling and over-the-counter medications.

Don't know where to start this discussion with your patients? Try approaching the subject by discussing the Helpline's 5 Keys to Patient Success. The keys are based on more than 25 years of research, as well as the OTH's many years of experience in helping people quit tobacco.

Whether it's a patient's first attempt at quitting or they've been down this road before, you can help them be happier, healthier and completely tobacco free.

KEY 1: SET A QUIT DATE

Setting a quit date gives tobacco users a goal to work toward. Have them pick a date and mark it on the calendar. They should tell family and friends about their quit date, too. Choosing a date within two weeks of their first call to the Helpline is recommended to give them enough time to prepare and plan for their quit date. Also, they should choose a day when they know they won't be busy, stressed or tempted to smoke.

KEY 2: HAVE A GOOD SUPPORT SYSTEM

Patients should find people who can help them quit. They could be family members, friends, coworkers or anyone they trust that could provide them with advice and strength on their journey to becoming tobacco free. Encourage patients to choose somebody who has successfully quit smoking themselves, as they can relate to their experience. As a provider, consider positioning yourself as part of your patients' support system. You and a Quit Coach™ from the OTH can be valuable allies during their process. No matter who is in their support system, they should talk to them often and let them know how they can help.

KEY 3: TOBACCO-PROOF SURROUNDINGS

A patient will have fewer urges to smoke if their environment supports their goal of being tobacco free. They should clear their home, car and place of work of anything that reminds them of smoking, soak any leftover tobacco products under water so they cannot be used and give or throw away ashtrays, matches and lighters. Patients should also look in drawers, purses, coat pockets or anywhere else where a stray

cigarette may be hiding. Additionally, patients' drapes and clothing should be cleaned, and cars shampooed to remove the smell of cigarettes.

The best time for patients to do this is the night before their quit date.

KEY 4: TAKE ADVANTAGE OF FREE NRTs

Nicotine replacement therapies (NRTs) are a safe, proven method that help break the cycle of addiction. They deliver small, measured doses of nicotine without the toxic chemicals and carcinogens found in tobacco products. This decreases the withdrawal symptoms triggered immediately after one stops using tobacco. SoonerCare patients can receive the following NRTs and medications for free with a prescription:

- Patches
- Gum
- Lozenges
- Nasal Spray
- Inhaler
- Zyban
- Chantix/Varenicline (180 days for 12 months)

Additionally, the OTH offers free nicotine patches, gum or lozenges to registered participants.

KEY 5: PRACTICE WITH MINI-QUITS

A mini-quit is when patients practice quitting for a short period of time before actually quitting for good. Mini-quits help patients cope with the urges to smoke and can make quitting for the long-term easier when their quit date arrives. Before their quit date, have them practice with mini-quits for a few hours during different times of the day. Also, have them practice during different activities, especially ones that trigger them to smoke.

Be a pillar of support for your patients during their quitting process. For additional support and a FREE customized quit plan, direct them to call 1-800-QUIT NOW or [register online](#).