Project TEACH
Relapse Prevention for
Tobacco Cessation

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**Definitions**

- **Relapse** - return to regular use after a period of abstinence
- **Lapse** - temporary slip; isolated or single use after a period of abstinence
Relapse Prevention

- Needed part of treatment
- Relapse is common, but not unavoidable
Treatment Elements

- Set Realistic Expectations
- Identify High Risk Situations
- Coping Plan
- Medication Plan
Common Myths

• I’ll be okay. I’ll just smoke one.
• I’ll just smoke for a while to get me through this difficult period.
• Now that I have quit smoking, I won’t have any more cravings.
Set Realistic Expectations

- Relapse is always a risk
- Life long addiction
- Physiological and behavioral aspects of cravings
High Risk Situations

• 1/3 of relapses occur with alcohol

• 2/3 occur when other smokers are present

• Negative situations and social pressure are the two most important causes of relapse
Common High Risk Situations

- Recently Quit
- Negative Emotions and Stress
- Alcohol
- Exposure to Smoking
- Social Situations/Celebrations
- Lapses
Recently Quit

• Explore possible factors:
  • Motivation
  • Physical or psychological cravings
  • Barriers
  • Quit approach
  • Relapse or lapse
Negative Emotions & Stress

- Stress management skills
- Self-talk
- Referral for therapy or psychiatry when needed
Alcohol

- Strong association between smoking and drinking
- Impairs decision making
- Social pressure
- Change behavior around alcohol
Exposure to Smoking

- Being offered a cigarette
- Access to cigarettes
- Living with other smokers
- Social pressure
Social Situations/Celebrations

• Social pressure
• Alcohol and meals
• Using cigarettes as a reward
Lapses

- Abstinence Violation Effect
- Reframe as minor slip
- View as a learning experience
- Return to abstinence
Coping Plan

• Identify high risk situations and obstacles for maintaining abstinence
• Develop a plan to cope
• Nicotine Anonymous
  www.nicotine-anonymous.org
Medication Plan

• Extend Medications
• Dosage Adjustments
• Combine Medications
Medication Plan

• Extend Chantix or Wellbutrin for an additional three months
• Continue NRTs after quit date
• Continue Wellbutrin long-term if needed for mood
If Relapse Occurs

• May need to return to treatment
• Reframe as learning experience
• Abstinence Violation Effect
When Relapse Occurs

1. Stop
2. Look and Listen
3. Cope
4. Don’t Beat Yourself Up
5. Recommit
6. Learn
7. Congratulate yourself