

## YOU ARE NOT ALONE

Stopping smoking is not easy, and most people make several attempts before quitting for good. Each attempt should be looked at not as a failure, but as a success.



Stopping smoking requires motivation and planning. Many people also need medication to assist them.



FOR SAFER SURGERY

### INFORMATION ABOUT SMOKING AND SURGERY

Developed by an Ontario Anesthesiologist with the support of Ontario's Anesthesiologists, a branch of the Ontario

Medical Association, this resource was designed for smokers who are about to have surgery and for family members who care for them.

[www.stopsmokingforsafersurgery.ca](http://www.stopsmokingforsafersurgery.ca)

**smokers'  
helpline**

1-877-513-5333  
[smokershelpline.ca](http://smokershelpline.ca)

Smokers' Helpline is a free, confidential service operated by the Canadian Cancer Society offering support and information about quitting smoking and tobacco use. Bilingual services are offered by

phone and online. Text messaging (text iQUIT to 123456) and interpreter services for over 100 languages are also available.

This resource was developed with educational funds from Pfizer.

## You want to:

- ✓ Have an uneventful anesthesia.
- ✓ Heal well without any infection or other complication.
- ✓ Get out of hospital as soon as possible.
- ✓ Have a successful operation, and return to pain-free mobility.

**YES** I understand a decision to quit smoking will significantly improve my return to pain-free mobility.

Date of Surgery: \_\_\_\_\_

Target Quit Date: \_\_\_\_\_

(ideally 6-8 weeks prior to surgery)

I agree to learn about options to quit smoking by connecting with:

- ✓ *Smokers' Helpline*
- ✓ My family doctor
- ✓ A local pharmacist



The Canadian Orthopaedic Foundation is a registered charity dedicated to helping bone and joint surgery patients by providing educational resources and support in print, online and via telephone.

[www.whenithurtstomove.org](http://www.whenithurtstomove.org) 1-800-461-3639  
Registered charity number: 89059 4740 RR0001



# STOPPING SMOKING BEFORE SURGERY

Even for a short time  
can reduce risks associated  
with surgery and improve  
your surgical success and  
return to mobility



## STOPPING SMOKING BEFORE SURGERY MAKES AN ENORMOUS DIFFERENCE TO YOUR CHANCES OF HAVING AN UNEVENTFUL ANESTHETIC AND A SUCCESSFUL SURGERY

### BENEFITS OF QUITTING BEFORE SURGERY

#### Improved Bone Healing

Smoking interferes with the cells needed to repair bone so that smokers are less able to heal after a broken bone or after back surgery.

In back surgery, the failure rate for spinal fusion is twice as high in smokers as in non-smokers.

The effects of smoking last for a long time. Smokers have a worse outcome one year after a knee ligament repair. They have more pain, poorer knee function, and are less likely to be able to return to sports than non-smokers.

### REDUCED WOUND INFECTIONS

Wound infections are more common in smokers than in non-smokers. Smokers are up to six times more likely to have a wound infection after surgery.

Fortunately, some of the benefits of stopping smoking come more quickly. In just four hours the level of carbon monoxide in the blood is halved. Eight hours without smoking reduces the level of carbon monoxide and nicotine in the blood to safe levels.

### SMOKING AND RISK OF SURGERY

Smokers do less well after surgery than non-smokers.

A recent study showed that smokers were 38% more likely to die after surgery than patients who had never smoked.

Compared to non-smokers, those who smoke have twice the normal risk of getting pneumonia and are:

- 80% more likely to have a heart attack.
- 70% more likely to have a stroke.
- 30% more likely to have a postoperative infection compared to non-smokers.

### BREATHING PROBLEMS

Tobacco smoke damages the lining of the lung, reducing its ability to clear waste particles and secretions, which can result in pneumonia. Cigarette smoking reduces the ability of the immune system to fight infection.

- Smokers have about a 40% chance of having breathing problems after surgery, compared to 11% in non-smokers.

### HEART PROBLEMS

Nicotine in tobacco smoke acts on the nervous system to cause high blood pressure and a faster heart rate, so the heart has to work harder. The carbon monoxide in cigarette smoke combines with haemoglobin in the blood so that it is less able to deliver oxygen to the heart and other tissues. Smokers experience heart stress during surgery more often than non-smokers.

- Smokers are 80% more likely to have a heart attack after surgery.

## QUITTING SMOKING SIX WEEKS BEFORE SURGERY HAS SIGNIFICANT POSITIVE IMPACT FOR BONE AND JOINT SURGERY PATIENTS

If it results in you stopping smoking for good, you will have done the best thing possible for your future health.

