

Smoking Cessation

By: HM2 Jerry Dahm

Quit smoking, it sounds easy right? Well for the millions of Americans that smoke each day, it can seem like an endless and daunting challenge. For those who don't smoke, it is hard to understand just how difficult it is to just stop smoking. Did you know that quitting smoking is as difficult as quitting heroine?

Nicotine addiction is an addiction that you get from not just cigarettes; but from chewing tobacco, cigars, pipes, etc. It is more than just a state of mind. Your body physically craves the nicotine that it gets from the tobacco. Did you know that tobacco smoke contains more than 4,000 chemicals? Many of these chemicals are toxic to the body. At least 60 chemicals are carcinogens, meaning they have been proven to cause cancer in humans.

Naphthalene- Mothball Chemical
Arsenic- Poison
Mercury- Deadly to the body
Carbon Monoxide- Car Exhaust
Ammonia- Household Cleaners

Benzene- Gasoline Additive
Cadmium- Component in Batteries
Butane- Cigarette lighter fluid
Acrolein- Pesticide
Stearic Acid- Candle Wax

These are just a few of the chemicals found in tobacco smoke. Inhaling these chemicals greatly increases the risk of getting multiple types of cancers, heart disease, stroke or any other combination that can decrease the lifespan such as emphysema or chronic bronchitis.

So how does one quit the habit of smoking or using other types of nicotine intake? There are numerous ways to quit smoking or dipping. One way is to just quit, throw away all your cigarettes or dip tins and tell yourself you are quitting.

-You tell yourself that you want to get a fresh start and breathe better.

-You start to realize that realize that you can save up to a hundred dollars or more a month by not smoking.

-You dream of flying to Hawaii with the money you saved in just 6 months.

A second way to quit your habit is to wean yourself off slowly and by using medications to help you stop the cravings. Participation in group discussions with others will alleviate some of the stress of quitting. A simple way for you to ease the need of nicotine without having the withdrawal symptoms that you can get by quitting "cold turkey". A third way to quit is by using other methods such as gums and other topical applications.

At the Wellness Center located in the Naval Air Station Lemoore Dental building, classes for smoking cessation are given at no cost to all active duty members, family

members and eligible retirees. If you can receive care at the hospital, you can attend classes at the wellness center. Classes start the first Thursday of the month at 1500 (3pm) and last for a total of four consecutive Thursdays. The classes are very casual and informative. In these classes you will receive free information on how to quit your nicotine intake, how to deal with any withdrawal symptoms and ways to make life better during the process. You will better understand the process it takes to quit and how to use the medications given over the course of the month. Group sessions help answer questions and give the needed support it takes to give up such a daunting task.

For those of you, who would like to quit your addiction to nicotine, contact the Wellness Center at (559) 998-2697 and sign up for the class. If for some reason that Thursdays are not a good day, contact us @ (559) 998-2697 to make other arrangements