

Want to quit smoking?

The DuPage County Health Department can help.

Our stop smoking program is a seven-session, six-week smoking cessation program. Based on proven and effective behavior modification, this program is offered **free of charge** to businesses and community members at various locations throughout DuPage County. It is taught by a trained Health Educator, and covers such topics as:

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| -Nicotine addiction vs. habit | -Time management skills |
| -Smoking triggers | -Fear of weight gain |
| -The importance of planning ahead | -Nutrition and physical activity |
| -Quitting techniques | -Symptoms of recovery (i.e. withdrawal) |
| -Dealing with emotions and stress | -Social situations |
| -Healthy lifestyle choices | -Getting needed support |
| -Maintenance | -Rewarding yourself |

What makes this program unique?

- It is a highly structured program. This method offers a systematic approach to quitting. There is a logical progression from awareness of the smoking habit, to actual behavior change. Participants are lead through the same stages of the process at the same time.
- This program focuses on behavior change. The focus is positive, and emphasizes the benefits to health, mastery of one's own life, etc. The activities and assignments instruct participants on how to change their behavior(s).
- It teaches maintenance. This component is the major difference between this program and other programs. Many people can stop smoking for a short time, but staying quit is the difficult part. Maintenance strategies are an integral part of the program.

What is the underlying philosophy?

The program is based on the premise that smoking is a learned habit. Individuals taught themselves how to smoke. They practiced so long and so well, that smoking became as automatic a behavior as breathing, eating, or sleeping. Quitting, then, is a process during which individuals must consciously unlearn this automatic behavior (of smoking) and substitute healthy alternatives.

The program offers participants a step-by-step plan for quitting smoking. It does not focus on scare tactics or offer a lot of statistical information on health effects. The assumption is made that people who come to the program already know that smoking is dangerous to their health. The focus is on **how to quit** smoking.

During the sessions, different techniques are introduced. They are based on principles and methods that help the individuals gain control over their behavior. It attempts to make quitting smoking a less stressful experience. This small group format encourages participants to work through the process and difficulties of quitting smoking together, as well as individuals. Group interaction is a key component of the program.

Nicotine replacement therapies (i.e. the patch, gum, etc.) are discussed, but are NOT provided in this program.



111 N. County Farm Road
Wheaton, IL 60187
630-682-7979 ext.7044

