

Even After
a Cancer
Diagnosis

It's Never Too Late To Assist Your Patient to Stop Tobacco Use

Brief Intervention Scripts

Patient Response	Health Professional Response	Rationale
<p>“What’s the point in quitting now? The harm has already been done.”</p>	<p>“I understand why you might feel this way, but it is never too late to quit. I know it’s hard, but stopping your tobacco use can improve the effectiveness of your chemotherapy and radiation treatments and may protect you from getting a second primary cancer. It is best practice to refer you to Tobacco-Free N.S. for help with quitting.”</p> <p><i>Provide family/patient with available Information and Resources, and obtain consent for TFNS referral on the fax referral form.</i></p>	<p>Addresses the myth that the damage is done and focuses on the current benefits of quitting.</p>
<p>“My life is too stressful to quit smoking right now.”</p>	<p>“This is a very stressful time for you and although smoking gives you the feeling of relieving stress, it actually puts more stress on your body. The staff at Tobacco-Free N.S. can help you find new ways to deal with stress. It is best practice to refer you to Tobacco-Free N.S. for help with quitting.”</p> <p><i>Provide family/patient with available Information and Resources, and obtain consent for TFNS referral on the fax referral form.</i></p>	<p>Acknowledges the patient’s feelings, clarifies the myth that smoking relieves stress and provides assurance that assistance is available to help deal with the stress of the diagnosis and quitting tobacco.</p>
<p>“I’ve cut down, but I don’t think I can quit completely.”</p>	<p>“It is great that you have cut down, but using any tobacco may reduce the benefit/effectiveness of your treatment. Tobacco-Free N.S. can work with you to develop a plan to quit completely. It is best practice to refer you to Tobacco-Free N.S. for help with quitting.”</p> <p><i>Provide family/patient with available Information and Resources, and obtain consent for TFNS referral on the fax referral form.</i></p>	<p>Provides positive reinforcement for efforts to date, but encourages continuing toward cessation. Reinforces the fact that support is available.</p>

This resource has been adapted from Alberta Health Services, Tobacco Free Futures Guidelines. For a complete list of references, visit '[Tobacco Free Futures, Chpt. 22: Adults With Cancer](#)'. It was approved by the Nova Scotia Cancer Patient Education Committee, February 2017. © Nova Scotia Health Authority, 2017. This information will be updated every 3 years, or as new clinical evidence emerges.

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<p>"Now is not a good time to talk about my smoking."</p>	<p>"I understand that this is a very difficult time for you and that smoking may be your last concern. But, as your doctor (member of oncology team), I want to help you stay as healthy as possible and get the most out of your treatment. Stopping smoking will do that. It is best practice to refer you to Tobacco Free Nova Scotia. If you decline, I can tell you how to contact Tobacco-Free N.S. when you are ready. We can also discuss it further at your next appointment."</p> <p><i>Provide family/patient with available information and resources.</i></p>	<p>Acknowledges the patient's feelings, but reinforces the importance of tobacco cessation to support cancer treatment plan. Supports patient autonomy, but leaves offer of support open.</p>
<p>"The last thing I need right now is a lecture about my smoking." OR "I wish people would stop nagging me about my smoking."</p>	<p>"I can understand that it feels like nagging, but as your physician (member of oncology team) I want to help you stay as healthy as possible and benefit the most from your treatment. Quitting is one of the most important things you can do. It is best practice to refer you to Tobacco Free Nova Scotia. If you decline, I can tell you how to contact Tobacco-Free N.S. when you are ready. We can also discuss it further at your next appointment."</p> <p><i>Provide family/patient with available information and resources.</i></p>	<p>Reinforces a non-judgmental approach and reinforces the importance of tobacco cessation for cancer treatment.</p>

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<p>"I've tried quitting before and it's just too hard."</p>	<p>"I know that quitting takes a lot of effort and it may take a few tries to be successful. Quitting is one of the most important things you can do to maximize the effectiveness of your cancer treatment. It is best practice to refer you to Tobacco-Free N.S. for support."</p> <p><i>Obtain patient consent via TFNS Fax Reference Form</i> <i>Provide family/patient with available information and resources.</i></p>	<p>Acknowledges that quitting is difficult, but stresses the importance of stopping tobacco use and the help that is available.</p>
<p>"I actually really like smoking/using tobacco products."</p>	<p>"I can appreciate that the decision to quit is a big one, but as your physician (member of oncology team) I want to help you stay as healthy as possible and benefit the most from your cancer treatment. Quitting is one of the most important things you can do."</p> <p><i>Obtain patient consent via TFNS Fax Reference Form</i> <i>Provide family/patient with available information and resources.</i></p>	<p>Reinforces the importance of quitting for improved health and cancer treatment outcomes.</p>