

Nurses can help patients quit smoking

August 12 2006

Several U.S. studies find that a few well-chosen words from a nurse can play a part in convincing smokers to quit.

The research was published in a special summer issue of the journal Nursing Research.

"These reports are evidence that nurses are widely recognized as central to global efforts to reduce the detrimental health effects of tobacco use," said Dr. Molly C. Dougherty, nursing research editor and professor of nursing at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

One study found that patients given information by nurses on how and why to quit smoking were 50 percent more likely to stop. Another found that nurses can be especially effective because they are the health-care professionals usually seen by the medically underserved.

About 45 million people still smoke in the United States, and researchers say cigarettes are the biggest single cause of preventable death.

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Citation: Nurses can help patients quit smoking (2006, August 12) retrieved 2 May 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2006-08-nurses-patients.html>

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