

Smokers with depression try to quit more often but find it harder

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Smoking harms nearly every organ in the body and causes many diseases. Credit: CDC/Debra Cartagena

People diagnosed with depression are about twice as likely to smoke as the general population. A survey of 6811 participants from Australia, Canada, the United Kingdom, and the USA, published today in the scientific journal *Addiction*, found that although depressed smokers tried to quit smoking more often than other smokers, they were more likely to

return to smoking within a month. This tendency seemed to be stronger for women than men.

Health professionals should be aware that smokers with depression may highly motivated to quit but will often need additional support. There is very strong evidence that seeing a stop-smoking specialist (eg, a Quitline advisor) and also using nicotine products such as nicotine skin patch and [nicotine gum](#) (ideally more than one product at a time), or the prescription medicine varenicline (Champix), substantially improves smokers' chances of quitting successfully.

Full details of the best methods of quitting smoking can be found in the book, *The SmokeFree Formula*, by Professor Robert West, published by Orion.

More information: Cooper J, Borland R, McKee SA, Yong H-H, Dugue P-A. (2015) Depression motivates quit attempts but predicts relapse: Differential findings for gender from the International Tobacco Control Study. *Addiction* 111: [DOI: 10.1111/add.13290](https://doi.org/10.1111/add.13290)

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