

# Effective options for quitting smoking during the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic

April 1 2020

---

Tobacco smoking has been identified as a major risk factor for developing Coronavirus (COVID-19) and complications that may arise as a result.<sup>1</sup> In addition, second-hand smoke increases the risk of acute respiratory infections.<sup>2</sup> Therefore, official advice is for people to stop smoking tobacco to minimize the risks associated with the current Coronavirus pandemic<sup>1</sup>. This information may feel alarming and anxiety inducing for people who currently smoke. However, there are evidence-based ways to increase the chances of successfully quitting.

Cochrane has created this Special Collection of existing Cochrane Systematic Reviews that summarize evidence for people wishing to give up smoking and for those helping them to give up. The Cochrane Reviews focus on interventions that are feasible under [public health measures](#) that restrict face to face contact with health practitioners. Given the risks of smoking during this pandemic, it is important to provide information that will help people to maximize their chances of success.

The Cochrane Special Collection, [COVID-19: Effective options for quitting smoking during the pandemic](#), includes Cochrane Reviews on nicotine replacement, behavioural support such as telephone, internet and text messaging programmes, and gradual quitting. This is one of several Special Collections relevant to COVID-19, other recently published collections include evidence relevant to [critical care](#) and [infection control and prevention measures](#).

Cochrane author, Jamie Hartmann-Boyce, from Nuffield Department of Primary Care Health Sciences, University of Oxford in the UK said, "There is a wealth of evidence on the best ways to stop smoking. The evidence suggests people who smoke should use a combination of stop smoking medicines and behavioural support to give them the best chances of success.<sup>3</sup> Options may be limited at this time, but there are ways to boost chances of quitting smoking that don't involve face-to-face contact or prescriptions. This Special Collection pulls together the evidence Cochrane has on this topic, to help health professionals advise people and for quitters to use to inform their own decisions."

Cochrane author, Nicola Lindson, also from the Nuffield Department of Primary Care Health Sciences, University of Oxford, UK, said "Anxiety and depression improve as a result of quitting smoking,<sup>4</sup> so there is good reason to hang on in there when the going gets tough in trying to give up. If one method doesn't work, don't be discouraged—evidence shows some people need to try to quit many times before successfully doing so. Just because you haven't been able to quit smoking before, doesn't mean you won't be able to now."

Cochrane Editor in Chief, Karla Soares-Weiser, added, "Cochrane is helping to build up the [evidence base](#) for those healthcare workers and policymakers working on the COVID-19 global response. We have a series of Special Collections being produced and shared with global decision makers. Smoking during the pandemic is associated with risks of contracting coronavirus and complications arising from it. This Collection is particularly helpful for people looking to give up [smoking](#) and those helping others to give up."

For freely available reviews related to the coronavirus visit Cochrane's [COVID-19 Resources page](#). Additional research is available on Wiley's [COVID-19 Hub](#).

Provided by Wiley

Citation: Effective options for quitting smoking during the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic (2020, April 1) retrieved 27 April 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2020-04-effective-options-coronavirus-covid-pandemic.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.