



HALDIMAND-NORFOLK HEALTH UNIT

WORKPLACE HEALTH

Introducing the NEW Smoke-Free Ontario Act!

On June 13, 2005 the Ontario Government enacted stronger and more comprehensive tobacco control legislation in the province.

The new *Smoke-Free Ontario Act*, will come into effect May 31, 2006.

The Act will rename and amend the Tobacco Control Act (TCA), 1994, repeal the Smoking in the Workplace Act and make complementary amendments to other acts. The goal of The Smoke-Free Ontario Act is three-fold. First it will prohibit smoking in all enclosed workplaces and public places. It will also ensure that only those 19 years of age or older can purchase cigarettes. Finally, the Act will phase out the retail display of tobacco products (eventually including a complete ban of all tobacco product displays, starting May 2008). Until May 31, 2006, the TCA will still be in effect.



What is included in the *Smoke-Free Ontario Act*?

- The Smoke-Free Ontario Act will prohibit smoking in all enclosed public places that are not primarily a place of residence as of May 31, 2006. This will include restaurants, bars, private clubs, healthcare facilities, public schools, private schools, university and college

residences, sports arenas, entertainment venues, work vehicles and all offices including government buildings.

- Smoking will also be prohibited in all enclosed workplaces in order to ensure that all workers will be protected.
- The Act also limits the sale, distribution and use of tobacco products, including stricter measures to ensure only those 19 years of age and older can buy cigarettes. It will also ban all countertop displays at retail outlets and prohibit the promotion of tobacco products at entertainment venues.
- There are exceptions for residential care facilities (retirement homes and supportive housing residences) in the Act, however *if you have a municipal by-law in place that prohibits smoking in these places, smoking will still not be allowed.*
- Hotels, motels or inns that meet certain conditions in the Act may also be an exception. However, *if you have a municipal by-law in place that prohibits smoking in these places, smoking will still not be allowed.*

For more information please contact Jennifer Lombardo, Health Promoter, Smoke-Free Ontario, at the Haldimand-Norfolk Health Unit. 519.426.6170 Ext. 3278 or 905.318.6623 (free from 905). You can also visit our website at www.hnhu.org.



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519.426.6170 Ext. 3239



Questions and Answers!

In order to help ease the transition to a smoke-free environment, the Haldimand-Norfolk Health Unit has created a list of questions that we feel workplaces may have.

Q: I noticed that there are some differences in the Haldimand County Smoke-Free By-Law and the new Smoke-Free Ontario Act, which information should I use?

A: The Smoke-Free Ontario Act explains that the *stricter* provision applies whenever there is a difference.

Q: How will the Act impact small businesses and workplaces with no employees?

A: Due to the fact that the Act applies to all "enclosed workplaces" (4 walls + a roof), smoking will not be allowed in *any* business, small or large, employees or not, at any given time.

Q: Why are designated smoking rooms (DSRs) with ventilation to remove smoke, not being allowed?

A: According to research, "no scientific authority or regulatory health body in the world has established a safe level of exposure to second-hand smoke." Furthermore, "despite all of the DSRs constructed, no ventilation system has been found to eliminate second-hand smoke. Therefore, workers and the public are exposed to second-hand smoke, and those in non-smoking areas may also be exposed, due to leakage." (Smoke-Free Ontario Fact sheet, 2005)

Q: Can you suggest anything that workplaces could do to ease the transition to becoming smoke-free?

A: Yes! You could start informing employees and customers about the upcoming change as early as possible. You can make sure your employees are familiar with the Act and how they can let customers and

fellow employees who still smoke know about the Act. You can also voluntarily become a smoke-free workplace before May 31, 2006 or offer "smoke-free" events to help ease the transition. You can download information from the Health Unit website or order resources from the Health Unit about the Act and circulate it to your staff. Finally, you can display posters, signs and a positive attitude to encourage staff and customers to comply with the upcoming Act.

For a more extensive list of questions and answers, please refer to the "Smoke-Free Ontario - A Guide for Workplaces and Public Places in Haldimand and Norfolk Counties", Section 5, available on the Haldimand-Norfolk Health Unit website www.hnhu.org

For more information contact Jennifer Lombardo, Health Promoter, Smoke-Free Ontario, at 519.426.6170 Ext. 3278 or 905.318.6623 (free from 905) at the Haldimand-Norfolk Health Unit. We look forward to working with you!

Thinking of Stopping Smoking?



Although most smokers know that cigarettes are bad for their health, many still find it very hard to give them up.

Tobacco addiction is the most common addiction in Canada. Smoking is the leading preventable cause of heart disease, lung disease, cancer and other health problems. More than 40,000 Canadians will die of smoking related diseases this year.

Why is it so hard to quit?

Some smokers are not thinking of quitting, but many are and would like to be smoke-free. Some have tried numerous times and have found it impossible. It can be very difficult to stop smoking. The reasons why are complex, and depend very much on each individual. Generally, there are two main factors that make people keep smoking.

Physical Effects of Nicotine

Tobacco contains nicotine, a psychoactive substance that affects how the brain functions. It is a stimulant that speeds up the brain and central nervous system. Nicotine also triggers the release of a chemical in the brain (dopamine) that is associated with feelings of pleasure. After smoking a cigarette, a person can feel either more awake or more relaxed.

Over time, your brain adjusts to all this stimulation (the "buzz") from nicotine by lowering your natural energy level or mood. This is one reason why you believe that you need a cigarette for a "boost" physically and emotionally.

Once this pattern in the brain is established the body gets used to having nicotine to feel normal. Being without tobacco for even a few hours can cause you to experience withdrawal symptoms like headaches, depression, anger, anxiety, and problems sleeping.

The good news is that withdrawal symptoms only last about a week for most

people. You can manage them by knowing what to expect and preparing for it. Remember that withdrawal symptoms are a sign that your body is healing itself. They are only temporary and soon you will regain your natural energy level.

Psychological Effects of Smoking

There is more to smoking than the physical reaction to nicotine. Smoking is a ritual that can itself be a source of pleasure. Many people find that the emotional attachment to handling a cigarette and lighting up is calming, enjoyable, or comforting. It becomes a first response to stress, anxiety, anger, sadness, and even happiness.

For some people, the act of smoking becomes a familiar source of comfort and part of daily life. It helps you relax and enjoy time with friends. It helps you to concentrate and gives you relief or a boost when you need it. Cigarettes become like a reliable friend who is always there for you.

Learning to live without tobacco is a process which takes time, commitment and effort. It is never too late to try!

Why Should I Stop Smoking?

There are many good reasons, but you need to find the ones that will motivate you.

Good for your health

- Within 20 minutes after finishing a cigarette, your blood pressure and pulse rate return to pre-cigarette level.
- After 8 hours, the oxygen levels in your blood will return to normal.
- Within a day, your risk of having a heart attack decreases.
- After 3 months, your circulation will improve and your lung function will increase.
- After one year, your risk of having a heart attack will be about half of what it would have been if you had continued to smoke.
- After 5 years, your risk of stroke will be greatly reduced.
- After 15 years, your risk of coronary heart disease will be the same as a non-smoker's.

Good for your life

- Your smoking will no longer affect the health of people around you.
- You will have more money to spend on other things, or to save.
- You will set a good example for your children or friends.
- You can be free of a drug that has been controlling you.
- You can feel proud of what you have done.

Strategies for Learning to Live Without Smoking

Seek self-help

Studies have shown that self-help materials reduce the chances of having a relapse.

Find support

The encouragement of people around you can help. It is good to have someone to talk to when you are finding it tough. If there is no one you are comfortable talking to, consider joining an online discussion group like QuitNet.

Focus on what smoking means to you

Research has found that focusing on the role of smoking in your life and the costs of quitting can be helpful. This makes it easier to compare the costs and benefits of

smoking to those of quitting. It also helps you to find other ways to meet the needs that smoking fulfilled. (Prochaska J. (1999) *The Heart and Soul of Change*. Mark Hubble et. al. (Ed.). American Psychological Association.)

Try nicotine replacement

Nicotine replacement therapies (such as patches, gum, or nasal spray) can be useful to help you deal with cravings. Some forms are available over the counter at your pharmacy; others require a prescription from your doctor.

Combine many supports

Research shows that it helps to combine different kinds of support. For example,

look for support from friends and family, use a self-help workbook, call a 1-800 counselling line, join a support group, and have some gum or patches on hand for when you have cravings. You will need to find the combination of supports that works best for you. (Fiore M.C., Bailey W.C., Cohen S.J., et al. *Treating Tobacco Use and Dependence*. Clinical Practice Guideline. Rockville, MD: U.S. Department of Public Health and Human Services. Public Health Service. June 2000.)

Look after yourself

Healthy eating, regular exercise, and thinking and saying positive things to yourself can all increase your confidence. This will help you to make lasting changes.

Smoker's Help Line

More than 6.6 million Canadians are already former smokers. You too can be a former smoker. It's never too late to quit! Quitting smoking benefits the health of all smokers. Whether you're thinking about quitting, are trying to quit for the first time, have tried to quit before or have quit already, Smokers' helpline can strengthen your willpower and improve your chance of success.

Smokers' Helpline has practical information about quitting and can offer options that have been proven to work. Talk to us about: making a "quit plan" coping with cravings, managing stress, quitting methods,

withdrawal symptoms, dealing with slips and relapses and strategies to help you reach your goal.

Call Smokers' Helpline today or visit Smokers' Helpline Online at: 1.877.513.5333 or www.cancer.ca/smokershelpline



Health Action

You probably know by now that certain cancers, diabetes, heart disease and stroke have four common risk factors:

1. physical inactivity
2. unhealthy eating
3. smoking
4. stress

Do you know that, when it comes to quitting smoking, these four factors can feed into each other? Being physically active, making healthy eating choices, and managing your stress can help you in your quest to stay smoke free. Here's how!

Many experts in smoking cessation believe that physical activity significantly aids efforts to stop smoking. Recent studies indicate that smokers have a much easier time kicking the habit when they add exercise to their cessation program. The results of one US study revealed that exercise subjects were twice as likely as those not exercising to quit smoking and stay smoke free.

Studies also reveal that for those smokers trying to quit:

- physical exertion reduces stress and promotes relaxation
- regular physical activity improves mood and may help to reduce depression
- being physically active increases your energy level and can improve the quality of your sleep
- physical activity may reduce nicotine craving and can be an effective alternative regimen for smokers who may not wish to use nicotine replacement therapy

Healthy eating also plays an important role in your smoking cessation program. Here are a few tips from Dieticians of Canada to keep in mind.

Eat well with several small meals throughout the day

Food will smell and taste better when you have stopped smoking. You may want to eat more as a way of coping with your nicotine cravings. Every day, eat smaller meals plus snacks, including a variety of whole grains, vegetables, fruits, lower fat dairy products, leaner meats and meat alternatives.

Snack Smarter

Instead of greasy, salty snack foods, choose lower calorie foods such as unbuttered popcorn, pretzels, raw veggie sticks and fresh fruit. Sugar free chewing gum and hard candy may also help.

Drink lots of fluids, but go easy on the caffeine and alcohol.

Drink 6 to 8 glasses of water a day to help flush the nicotine out of your system and keep your mouth busy when you're craving a cigarette. Cut back on caffeinated choices that may increase your anxiety level, like coffee, tea and colas. Switch to decaf versions or mix in decaf with your regular coffee or tea. Alcohol can also trigger a cigarette craving, especially if you used

to drink and smoke at the same time.

Making any lifestyle change can be stressful. You may be using cigarettes as a way to cope with stress – making quitting smoking even more stressful. Spend some time thinking about alternative ways to manage your stress or help you relax. Here are a few tips you may find helpful:

- Try a relaxing activity such as yoga, tai chi, or meditation.
- Pick up a hobby – especially one using your hands like knitting or building models – is a great way to relax.
- Create a support system around you by telling your friends, co-workers, and family that you are quitting smoking. Turn to them for encouragement when you are craving a cigarette.

Not sure how much activity to add into your day?

Canada's Physical Activity Guide for adults recommends 60 minutes of activity each day. Physical activity doesn't have to be extremely intense in order to be beneficial, nor do you have to do 60 minutes all at once. You can accumulate activity throughout the day, aiming for a total of 60 minutes. A great place to start is to add 10 minutes to what you are doing right now, and gradually add increase your daily total by 10 minutes every week or so.

When it comes to physical activity, be creative! You don't have to work out in a gym or do an activity you don't enjoy. How about walking, working out at home to exercise DVDs, or putting on music while you houseclean or dance with your kids? How about yoga, belly dancing, spinning, cross country skiing, skating or walking? You have lots to choose from!

Health Action is a community-based coalition in Haldimand and Norfolk Counties. The coalition works with community agencies and individuals to promote healthy living with a focus to reducing chronic diseases, such as heart disease, cancer, diabetes, and stroke.



For more information about Health Action, or to learn about programs happening in your community, please visit www.healthaction.ca or contact Andrea Bodkin, Heart Health Coordinator 519.426.6170 Ext. 3208.

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