

Smoking and Covid-19 Conversation Guide



Q - “Does smoking make the impact of Covid worse?”

A - Yes, smokers who contract Covid-19 go on to develop more severe symptoms. Smoking affects the immune system and its responsiveness to infections.

The act of smoking means hands are in contact with the mouth increasing the likelihood of transmission of the virus.

Q - “What about reports saying smoking can protect you from the virus?”

A - Despite reports from tests carried out in France, there isn't enough information currently to confirm any link between nicotine and the prevention of COVID-19. Recent UK data also shows more smokers reporting symptoms.

For people who smoke, stopping now is also one of the best things they can do to improve their overall health. It is the tobacco in cigarettes which is harmful and those using nicotine products to quit such as patches or gum, should continue to do so.

Q - “Are more people quitting because of Covid?”

A - Since the Covid-19 outbreak across the UK there has been a rise in smokers trying to quit, including an estimated 37,000 smokers in Wales.

Q - “What about smoking and finances?”

A - Quitting smoking can help people save considerable amounts of money.

The minimum price for a pack of 20 cigarettes is £8.94, so someone smoking 10 cigarettes a day would spend a minimum of £1,632 a year, £136 a month and £31 a week.

For a couple that means £3,264 a year, £272 a month and £62 a week – enough to pay for regular food shops.

Q - “How quickly will my health improve after quitting smoking?”

A - 20 minutes - your body already starts to recover. Your heart rate and blood pressure should return to a normal level.

8 hours - nicotine has left your blood stream and you might start experiencing cravings.

24 hours - anxiety and ‘stress’ levels peak. This feeling however isn’t usually stress - it’s a sign of withdrawal.

1 week - one week smokefree means you are over the worst of it. From this point the body no longer physically craves tobacco. Now it is a case of mind over matter!

1 month - Those who make it to 4 weeks are 5x more likely to stay smokefree for good.

1 year - within 1 year of quitting your risk of a heart attack reduces up to 50% and the air sacs in your lungs have regrown and healed some of the damage caused by smoking.