



## *Three Minutes or Less Can Save Lives*

The advice of a health care professional can more than double smoking cessation success rates. Tobacco use has been cited as the leading preventable cause of illness and death in our society, responsible for more than 435,000 premature deaths in 2000.<sup>1</sup> Tobacco dependence is a chronic disease that deserves treatment. Effective treatments have been identified and should be used with every current and former tobacco user.

Cigarette smoking is the most significant risk factor in the development and progression of periodontal disease. It is a major risk factor for oral and pharyngeal cancer. Smoking is also the leading cause of preventable death and disability in the United States. According to the 2000 National Health Interview Survey, 70 percent of adult smokers in the United States wanted to quit smoking. There is no clinical intervention available today that can reduce illness, prevent death, and increase quality of life more than effective tobacco treatment interventions.

At least 50 percent of smokers see a dentist each year.<sup>2</sup> Dental hygienists are uniquely poised to intervene with patients/clients who use tobacco. The dental hygiene appointment is the most frequently used treatment utilized by patients/clients. This places dental hygienists in a unique position to provide this much needed service to the public.

### **Health Benefits to the Smoker**

#### *Immediate health benefits of quitting include:*

- Within one year, the risk of coronary heart disease is reduced by 50%.
- Upon quitting there is an immediate decrease in respiratory symptoms and infections
- Former smokers report fewer days of illness and have fewer health complaints.
- Women who quit before becoming pregnant reduce the risk of low infant birth weights.<sup>3</sup>

#### *Long term health benefits:*

- Smokers who quit before age 50 cut their risk of death by 50% within 15 years after quitting.
- Risk of lung cancer, other cancers, heart attack, stroke and chronic lung disease are reduced.<sup>3</sup>

There are also benefits to the community and family to consider. Reducing the number of smokers has an additional health benefit of reducing exposure of others to secondhand smoke and its harmful carcinogens. Children of ex-smokers are less likely to start using tobacco. Thus, a successful cessation program for adults is an effective way to prevent children from starting to smoke.

The purpose of ADHA's **Ask. Advise. Refer.** Smoking Cessation Initiative (SCI) is to increase the number of dental hygienists who perform smoking cessation interventions with their patients/clients. According to a baseline study in the Journal of Dental Hygiene (Winter 2001),

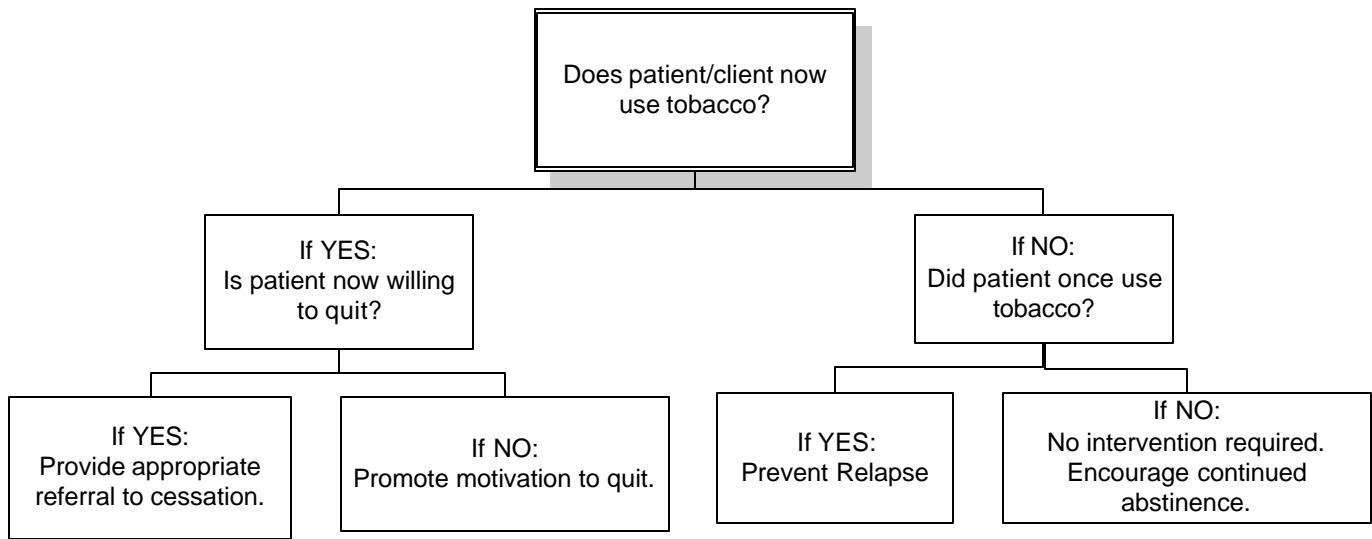
<sup>1</sup> JAMA 2004;291:1238-1245

<sup>2</sup> A clinical practice guideline for treating tobacco use and dependence: a US Public Health Service report. JAMA 2000;283:8244-54

<sup>3</sup> DHHS publication no. (CDC) 90-8416 "Health benefits of smoking cessation: a report of the Surgeon General, 1990

one in four dental hygienists screen their patients/clients regarding tobacco rate of use, type and amount. The target of this initiative is to increase that figure to 50% by 2006. This initiative is designed as a new smoking cessation tool to attract those practitioners who have been discouraged by the perceived time-involvement for performing the 5 A's (**Ask. Advise. Assess. Assist. Arrange.**) as defined in the national standard of care clinical practice guidelines. The ADHA continues to advocate the efforts of all dental hygienists who regularly perform the 5 A's within their clinical practices.

Dental hygienists should consider carefully the use of personal testimonials in encouraging their patients/clients to quit. A careful assessment of each patient/client is the most appropriate approach in determining the need for that particular type of encouragement. It is advocated that you use personal testimonials with patients/clients at your discretion only if you yourself have successfully quit smoking and feel the approach is warranted with the patient/client.



## Coding for Treatment of Tobacco Use and Dependence

Record:

ADA Code 1320 – Tobacco Counseling for the Control and Prevention of Oral Disease

## Ask. Advise. Refer. Protocols

### **STEP 1 Ask**

**1 Minute**

- Systemically ask every patient/client about tobacco use at every visit.<sup>4</sup>
  - Determine if patient/client is current, former, or never tobacco user.
  - Determine what form of tobacco is used.
  - Determine frequency of use.
  - Document tobacco use status in the dental record.
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### **Step 2 Advise**

**1 Minute**

- In a clear, strong, and personalized manner, urge every tobacco user to quit.
  - Tobacco users who have failed in previous quit attempts should be told that most people make repeated quit attempts before they are successful.
  - Employ the teachable moment: link oral findings with advice.
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### **Step 3 Refer**

**1 Minute**

- Determine if patient/client is interested in quitting.
- For those interested in quitting provide information on:
  - Statewide or national quitlines
  - Statewide or national websites
  - Local cessation programs<sup>5</sup>
- Use proactive referral if available
  - Request written<sup>6</sup> patient permission to fax their contact information to a cessation quitline or program. Inform the patient cessation program staff will contact them.
  - Complete fax referral and document in dental record.
- Use reactive referral
  - Provide patient with contact information for cessation quitlines, websites, and/or local programs.
    - Check <http://smokefree.gov> for a current list of all state quitlines.
    - **National Cancer Institute's Quitline: 1-877-44U-QUIT**
    - Youth's may prefer web based cessation program: <http://smokefree.gov/> or <http://www.quitnet.com> web based counseling with three free counseling sessions.
  - Document referral on dental record.

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<sup>4</sup> Repeated assessment is not necessary in the case of the adult who has never used tobacco or has not used for many years, and for whom this information is clearly documented in the dental record.

<sup>5</sup> Dental hygienists should maintain a current listing of local cessation programs, quitlines and websites in their area.

<sup>6</sup> Written permission is required to comply with HIPAA specifications. Contact your state or local quitline or cessation program to obtain fax forms.

## Ask. Advise. Refer. Scripts

Determine if the patient/client uses tobacco.

Ask about the type and amount of tobacco used.

*"Do you use tobacco in any form"*

*"Have you ever used tobacco in the past"*

If **Yes**,

*"How many cigarettes per day do you smoke"*

*"How many cigars per day do you smoke?"*

*"How many bowls of pipe tobacco do you use per day"*

If patient/client uses **spit tobacco**:

*"How many cans of snuff a day do you use?"*

*"How many pouches of chew per week do you use?"*

*"Do others in your household use tobacco?"*

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For the patient/client who never regularly used tobacco.

Congratulate the patients/clients on their status and encourage continued abstinence.

*"Congratulations, you have made a wise choice to protect your health."*

*"Congratulations, you have very good judgment."*

*"Congratulations on being a non-smoker."*

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For the patient/client who quit using tobacco.

Congratulate patients/clients on their successes and encourage continued cessation.

*"Congratulations, you made a wise decision."*

*"Congratulations on quitting tobacco use. We have some good programs to help you remain tobacco-free. I can give you the contact information for the program."*

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For the patient/clients who currently uses tobacco?

Provide clear, strong and personalized messages advising the patient to quit.

*"Have you thought about quitting?"*

*"As your dental hygienist, I must advise you to stop smoking now."*

*"Do you want to quit? I can help you. **Let me give you the phone number for the statewide quitline.** You can receive free counseling on how to quit and remain tobacco-free."*

*"Quitlines have had proven success in helping people get through the difficult stages of quitting and most people prefer to use them."*

*"I know quitting smoking is very difficult. **Most people who want to quit are successful.** Sometimes it takes more than one try. I know you can do it. Let me refer you to the cessation quitline, they can help you quit."*

*"I can't see what tobacco is doing to your heart, lungs, brain and other organs, but I would like to show you some **changes in your mouth.**"*

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*For the pregnant mother:*

*"My best advice for you and your baby is for you to quit smoking"*

*"As your dental hygienist, I need you to know that quitting smoking is the most important thing you can do to protect your baby and your own health."*

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*For hospitalized patients/clients:*

*"By quitting smoking you can reduce your health problems and heal more quickly."*

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*For heart attack patients/clients:*

*"Quitting smoking is one of the most important things you can do to reduce your risk of a second heart attack."*

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*For lung, head and neck cancer patients/clients:*

*"By quitting smoking, you reduce your chances of a second cancer."*

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*For parents of children and adolescents:*

*"By quitting smoking, you protect your children from illnesses caused by secondhand smoke."*

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*For youth:*

*"Did you know that most young people don't smoke. I can help you quit."*

*"At [www.smokefree.gov](http://www.smokefree.gov) you can **chat online** with someone to help you quit."*

*"Tobacco companies want you to think their products make you look healthy and exciting like the people in their ads. Actually, tobacco can make you look sick and dull—and it can cause you to have yellow teeth and fingers, bad breath and make your clothing and hair smell."*

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*For dental hygienists who are former smokers and have successfully quit smoking:*

Determine if the patient/client will benefit from a personal testimonial. Use discretion and determine if the situation is appropriate.

*"I can empathize with you. It took me several attempts at quitting before I was successful."*

*"I know it's difficult for you, I've found it is easier to quit with assistance."*

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