**Nicotine Replacement Therapy**

Cautions and contraindications: severe heart disease (including severe arrhythmia or immediately post-heart attack), recent stroke. Nicotine may worsen the haemodynamic effects of adenosine. Most of the undesirable effects reported by the patients occur during the first 2-3 weeks after start of treatment. Use in pregnancy or in neonates under medical supervision.

**Other Drug Treatment**

Varenicline is a non-nicotine medicine which can reduce the enjoyment of cigarette when the quit date is the day in the 3rd week of treatment when you will stop smoking, not a date to stop smoking. Start treatment 2-3 weeks before the quit date. Dose: Day 1-3: 1mg tid. Day 4-7: 1/2mg tid. Day 8 onwards 1mg tid. Tablets should be swallowed whole with water. Control is used to pregnancy. Lower levels of varenicline are excreted in breast milk. For further information please refer to the Summary of Product Characteristics.


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**Health Promotion & Disease Prevention Directorate**

Ministry for Health, the Elderly and Community Care

ABC for Smoking Cessation
ABC for Smoking Cessation

What is ABC?

ABC (Ask, Brief advice, Cessation support) is a simple memory aid that incorporates the key steps for screening of tobacco use and advise on its management. ABC is about providing good clinical practice and the best quality care for your patient. The rationale for this approach is to encourage more smokers to make more quit attempts, supported with evidence-based treatments, and to make these attempts more often.

Ask

Ask all people if they smoke and document their smoking status. Reinforce the status of ex-smokers by congratulating them on their achievement.

BRIEF ADVICE

1. Give brief, clear advice to all smokers and record this information.
2. Personalise the advice - Discuss how stopping smoking might help the current illness, for example, improve health, benefits to children with reduced exposure to passive smoking, save money. Link smoking to what is important for the patient.
3. Acknowledge that although it can be hard to stop smoking, it is not an impossible task to achieve.

CESSION SUPPORT

Recommend that the best results are achieved with a combination of an NRT and behavioural support.

1) Encourage participation from Tobacco Dependence Support Services provided by the Health Promotion and Disease Prevention Directorate
   - Free Smoking Cessation Classes (fill in an application for the patient)
   - Leaflets
   - Tobacco Quitline (8007 3333)
   - Facebook page – Quit Tobacco Malta

2) Provide brief support yourself if you have the time - you can save lives.
3) Recommend or write a prescription for NRTs, bupropion or varenicline.
4) Some people will not want to stop straight away. Accept the answer non-judgmental. Encourage them to eventually quit by showing them that you can help them, whenever they are ready.

Key Messages for All Healthcare Professionals

- 1 in 4 people, aged 15 years and over, smoke in Malta.
- 1 in 10 deaths were attributable to smoking in 2009 in Malta.
- Smoking cessation support works and is highly cost-effective.
- For half of all smokers, treatment to stop smoking will be a life-saving intervention.
- Brief advice to quit from healthcare professionals works. The evidence shows that for every 40 people advised to stop smoking 1 will go on to quit smoking long term.
- Without support only 3–5% of smokers manage to stop smoking in the long term.
- There are no “silver bullets” to quit. A combination of health care professional support ( quitting, smoking cessation classes) and NRTs increase quit rates at least 4-fold.
- If you SMOKE YOURSELF, seek help – you can still avail yourself from the services mentioned above. Lead by example!
- Tobacco Smoking is the most significant preventable cause of cancer needing widespread action to reduce its incidence. This publication is a resource that was included in and will be financed from the budget of the Nation Cancer Plan for 2011–2015.

References