



This month, EAP is introducing a new employee benefit: Just Breathe Smoking Cessation classes, which can be accessed in person at Roswell Park Cancer Institute or online. We sat down with Emily Foschio and Ellen Denizard, Tobacco Control Specialists at Roswell, to discuss some of the most common myths about smoking cessation.

Myth #1: Quitting cold turkey is best.

“While a lot of people think that quitting cold turkey is the best way to go, only 5% of people successfully quit cold turkey,” Foschio says. “It’s just not the most effective method, although it works for some.” Why? Nicotine is one of the hardest addictions to break, and the withdrawal symptoms are numerous and often very uncomfortable. Just a few: intense nicotine cravings, tingling, sweating, nausea, headaches, sore throat, and insomnia.

Instead, Foschio and Denizard recommend nicotine replacement therapy. “Talk with your doctor and discuss which cessation medications might work best for you,” Denizard advises. “Nicotine replacement therapy such as the patch and gum and prescription medications can help make the quitting process a little easier.”

Myth #2: You can’t combine medications and nicotine replacement therapies.

You might find that quitting requires more than just one kind of treatment. “Many people find success with combination therapies,” Denizard advises. For example, using a long-acting patch with a short-acting gum or lozenge can be helpful when strong cravings occur. If you decide to try Zyban, talk to your doctor about a fast acting NRT. If you try Chantix, there is no need for any additional medications. Your doctor will be able to help you figure out the right combination of NRT for you.

Myth #3: If you relapse, you’ve failed.

If it’s difficult for you to quit smoking, you are not alone. Foschio meets people all the time in this situation: “they tell me they have tried a few times to quit and have relapsed many times. The average person tries seven times before they quit for good.” This isn’t cause for alarm, though: you can quit, you might just need help with medications and counseling from your doctor and a quit coach. If you accept that relapse does not mean failure, you’re already ahead of the game.

Myth #4: E-cigarettes are better for you than regular cigarettes.

E-cigarettes are not an FDA-approved cessation aide. They do contain harmful and potentially harmful chemicals, and we cannot state for certain that they are safe. “If you want to quit, turn to one of the seven FDA-approved medications in combination with counseling from a doctor or quit coach,” Foschio recommends.

Are You Ready to Be a Quitter?

EAP can now connect you to the Just Breathe Smoking Cessation Program through Roswell Park Cancer Institute. You can access this program through online classes or by attending classes at Roswell Park. Call EAP at (716) 681-4300 or (800) 888-4162 for more information.