

Smoking Cessation

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You will know that using DEPPA to highlight the risks of smoking to their oral health can be the prompt patients need to make an attempt at smoking cessation. The next step is to provide your patients with the methodology to help them succeed in their aim. Prof Robert West of UCL has prepared a patient factsheet that explains the latest understanding of what works best. This factsheet, can now be found on your Questionnaire and Info Sheet tab. Prof West summarises this below:

The best ways to stop smoking

Professor Robert West, University College London

"Dentists know better than anyone the harm caused by smoking and most dentists advise patients to stop where they feel it appropriate. New evidence is accumulating all the time on the best ways of stopping and dentists can play an extremely useful role in communicating this to their patients.

On average the highest quit rates are achieved with a prescription for varenicline (Champix) together with support from a specialist stop-smoking advisor. Almost as good is what we call 'dual form' nicotine replacement therapy (NRT) – nicotine skin patch plus any of the faster acting products such as gum or lozenge – plus specialist support. Patients should be able to access this through their GP.

If patients don't want to go to the trouble of seeing an advisor then just getting a prescription for varenicline or dual-form NRT is the next best thing.

For patients who do not want to get a prescription, just buying NRT from a shop is unlikely to be of much use, but research is showing that e-cigarettes can help and so can smartphone apps. The two widely available apps in the UK with the best evidence are SF28 and Smoke Free."