

Patient information

Stop Smoking before your Operation

Anaesthesia

You may be having surgery in the coming months and now is the time to think about stopping smoking before your operation (op).

We understand it is difficult to stop, however smoking greatly increases the risk of complications during and after surgery and this leaflet is designed to help you make the choice to stop.

What are the benefits of giving up smoking before my op?

- People who smoke normally require more anaesthetic than normal. Stopping before your surgery will mean you will require less anaesthetic and this will help to speed up your recovery.
- Less time spent in the recovery room and less need for oxygen therapy.
- There is less likelihood of you developing a chest infection following surgery.
- Wounds will heal more quickly. Smoker's wounds take longer to heal due to the reduced amount of oxygen circulating in the blood and the effect of nicotine on the production of essential healing chemicals.
- There is a lower risk of developing dangerous blood clots after surgery.
- Less need for pain relief after surgery.

Did you know that health benefits begin the minute you give up smoking?

- Within the first hour your blood pressure and pulse will return to normal.
- After eight hours the level of carbon monoxide in your blood will half and your oxygen levels will return to normal.
- After 24 hours the carbon monoxide leaves your body and within 48 hours your body is nicotine free.
- After just a few weeks you will start to notice your food tastes better, your lungs are clearer and you have more energy.
- Within 12 weeks your circulation is now improved throughout your body.

How long before the op should I stop?

The sooner you stop before your op the better. Research suggests that stopping one month before surgery can make a great difference to the speed you recover and get back to good health.

Ideally you should aim to stop smoking about eight weeks before your surgery as this greatly reduces the risk of you developing complications.

People who smoke have a one in three risk of developing a post-operative chest infection. This can be reduced to one in ten if you stop smoking eight weeks before your operation.

We appreciate it is not always possible to give up in advance of your op especially for those undergoing emergency surgery, however giving up smoking for just a few days can make a big difference to your recovery as carbon monoxide and nicotine are cleared from your body within 48 hours.

Help and support

Research has shown you are up to four times more likely to quit with help and support. The following is a list of resources that are there to help you.

- **Smoke Free Liverpool Tel: 0151 374 2535 or Tel 0800 061 4212**
- **NHS Free Smoking Helpline Tel: 0300 123 1044**
- **NHS Pregnancy Smoking Helpline Tel: 0800 169 9169**

Websites

- **www.smokefree.nhs.uk**
- **www.ash.org.uk**
- **www.info@smokefreeliverpool.co.uk**

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All Trust approved information is available on request in alternative formats, including other languages, easy read, large print, audio, Braille, moon and electronically.

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