



# UP CLOSE WITH TOBACCO AND BEHAVIORAL HEALTH



**Behavioral health** refers to the presence or absence of a **mental illness, substance use disorder, or both**. Those coping with a behavioral health challenge make up about **25%** of the population, but consume **40%** of all purchased cigarettes. **Over half** of clients in Wisconsin Community Support Programs that treat people with persistent mental illness currently smoke cigarettes.

## QUITTING TOBACCO IS GOOD FOR MENTAL HEALTH



Behavioral health treatment programs have historically allowed clients to use tobacco products, in part because of the **mistaken belief** that smoking alleviates symptoms of mental health conditions long term, and that quitting can interrupt treatment.

*Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)*



More research is needed to determine why smokers are **more likely** than nonsmokers to experience **depression, anxiety, and other mental health conditions**. However, it is important to note that smoking is **not** a treatment for these conditions and is **not** a healthy way of coping with these conditions.

*Sources: American Lung Association (ALA), CDC*



The majority of smokers who receive behavioral health treatment **want to quit**. Helping people quit can be an integral part of treating other behavioral health concerns. Treating tobacco dependence as part of treating a substance use disorder has led to **24% improvement** in long-term abstinence from alcohol or illicit substances. In Wisconsin, **65%** of clients at Community Support Programs or Comprehensive Community Services were able to **reduce** their smoking.

*Sources: CDC, 2018 National Health Interview Survey*



Quitting using tobacco has **immediate** health benefits, **supports** other behavioral health treatments, and **decreases** a person's chance of relapse. A year after quitting, anxiety, depression and stress symptoms typically **decrease**. Mental health medication can sometimes be **reduced** following cessation.

*Sources: CDC*

## FREE QUIT SERVICES ARE AVAILABLE

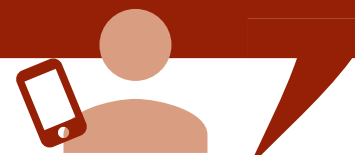
Free quit services are available for all Medicaid, BadgerCare Plus, and SeniorCare members in Wisconsin by contacting a provider or calling the **Wisconsin Tobacco Quit Line** at **1-800-QUIT-NOW**.



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**Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)** are potentially traumatic events that occur in childhood. The stress from ACEs can **change** brain development and affect how a person responds to stress. ACEs are linked to **chronic health problems, mental illness, and substance use disorders** in adulthood. People with ACEs have an increased risk of **using** and becoming **seriously ill** from tobacco products.

*Source: CDC*



Working with individuals who have experienced ACEs or other kinds of trauma to **build resilience** is an important part of preventing the negative health events associated with that trauma. Creating **healthy** ways to cope with stress, like exercising or talking with a trusted friend, is one way to build resilience.

*Sources: CDC*



Some of the **immediate benefits** of quitting conventional tobacco include an increased sense of taste and smell, lower blood pressure, better oxygen levels, improved blood circulation, and more money to spend.

*Sources: CDC, ALA*



It can be hard to quit smoking when those around you also smoke. Smoking is often considered a social event. Some people fear that if they quit smoking they will lose friends and social opportunities. However, a year after quitting, social networks are **larger** than when the person was smoking.

*Sources: Society for Research on Nicotine and Tobacco*

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