



## What is Mental Health?<sup>1</sup>

According to [MentalHealth.gov](https://www.mentalhealth.gov/), “Mental health includes our emotional, psychological, and social well-being. It affects how we think, feel, and act. It also helps determine how we handle stress, relate to others, and make choices.”

## Warning Signs<sup>2</sup>

If you or someone you know is experiencing any of the following symptoms, it may be a warning sign about your mental health:

- Eating or sleeping too much or too little
- Low or no energy
- Unexplained aches
- Feeling helpless or hopeless
- Use of tobacco products including e-cigarettes, fighting with family and friends

## Smoking and Mental Illness<sup>3</sup>

- People with behavioral health conditions are more likely to smoke. Psychologists are among those working to understand why and helping them quit.
- People with mental health conditions and substance use disorders are a large customer base for the tobacco industry. They are estimated to account for 40% of cigarettes smoked in the U.S., despite only making up 25% of the population.
- Quitting smoking will not only help improve the patients’ physical health, but may in fact increase their mental health symptoms due to nicotine withdrawal symptoms.

## Mental Health Concerns and Facts<sup>4</sup>

- “26 studies that assessed mental health with questionnaires designed to measure anxiety, depression, mixed anxiety and depression, psychological quality of life, positive affect, and stress were included. Follow-up mental health scores were measured between seven weeks and nine years after baseline. Anxiety, depression, mixed anxiety and depression, and stress significantly decreased between baseline and follow-up in quitters compared with continuing smokers.”
- “Smoking cessation is associated with reduced depression, anxiety, and stress and improved positive mood and quality of life compared with continuing to smoke.”

## How Can You Quit?

The Lung Association encourages anyone interested in quitting tobacco to consider a treatment plan that includes two components—behavioral counseling, plus medication as approved by FDA. This combination is evidence-based and proven effective to provide an individual with the highest rates of success as well as sustaining a tobacco-free lifestyle for six months or more. Enrolling in a behavioral counseling program, such as American Lung Association’s Freedom From Smoking® program, increases an individual’s chance of success by 50%. Including an FDA-approved cessation medication may further increase this success rate an additional 21-44%. The seven medications that are approved by FDA and found to be effective cessation aides include: the nicotine patch, nicotine gum, nicotine lozenge, nicotine nasal spray, nicotine inhaler, bupropion or varenicline. As a leader in cessation over the past 40 years, the Lung Association has focused on analyzing best practices associated in cessation programming to meet the needs of all populations. Research shows that for individuals diagnosed with a mental health illness, the most effective course of action among cessation efforts include:

- Use of combination therapy (nicotine patch for long term release plus an intermittent nicotine lozenge for breakthrough cravings as needed.)
- Continual use of FDA-approved Nicotine Replacement Therapy or medication for a minimum of six months.
- Have additional support systems in place such as participation in American Lung Association’s Quit Now: Freedom From Smoking Inspire online quit smoking support group and discussion community.
- Focus on the rewards of quitting. What benefits are you experiencing?
- Build a strong relapse prevention plan.
- Increase the length and duration of tobacco cessation counseling sessions (90 minutes once per week for 12+ weeks is recommended.)

1 What is Mental Health? MentalHealth.gov. August 22, 2017.

2 Weir, Kirsten. Smoking and Mental Health, American Psychological Association. 2013, Vol 44, No 6. <https://www.apa.org/monitor/2013/06/smoking>

3 BMJ 2014;348:g1151 <https://www.bmj.com/content/348/bmj.g1151>

4 Tobacco is a social justice issue: Mental health. Truth Initiative. August 20, 2017. <https://truthinitiative.org/news/how-tobacco-companies-linked-cigarettes-and-mental-health>

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## How to Quit

### Freedom From Smoking®

Freedom From Smoking® is a great fit for individuals living with mental illness, as it provides additional support needed, focuses on the rewards of abstinence, and provides the ground work for a strong relapse prevention program. Freedom From Smoking Plus® also provides 12 full months of ongoing support for quitters, which increases the length and duration of counseling and continual support services to assist in long-term sustainability rates. Should you have any questions or would like additional support in developing a treatment plan please visit us on [Lung.org](http://Lung.org) or give us a call at 1-800-LUNGUSA.

### Pennsylvania Quitline

**1 (800) QUIT-NOW (784-8669)**

**Spanish-speaking: 1 (855) DEJELLO-YA (335-3569)**

The Pennsylvania Quitline is a free local resource for quitting smoking. It provides over-the-phone counseling services with a certified quit coach, nicotine patches and lozenges (for qualified callers), and support for all Pennsylvania residents.

Information and self-help materials are available at [PA.QuitLogix.org](http://PA.QuitLogix.org).



1-800-LUNGUSA | [Lung.org](http://Lung.org)