The Five A’s

As a health care provider you are an important resource to your patients and play a vital role in their health care decisions and choices. Quitting tobacco use is one of the most impactful health decisions a person can make. To help your patients make that decision, remember the “Five A’s” when counseling.

ASK: ➔ Ask your patient about his/her tobacco use at every visit.
➔ Identify all tobacco use at every visit.
➔ Ask: “How many cigarettes do you smoke every day?”
  “How often do you dip?”

ADVISE: ➔ Strongly urge all tobacco users to quit.
➔ Use clear, strong and personalized language:
  • “You should quit smoking (or chewing) and I can help you.”
  • “Cutting back when you’re sick isn’t enough.”
  • “You need to know that quitting smoking is the most important thing you can do to protect your health now and in the future.”

ASSESS: ➔ Determine your patient’s willingness to quit.
➔ Ask every tobacco user if they are willing to quit at this time.
➔ If the patient is willing to participate in an intensive treatment, complete a FAX Referral form for the Nebraska Tobacco Quitline.
  • Use either a Medicaid FAX referral form for those on Medicaid or the regular FAX referral form for all others.

ASSIST: ➔ Help your patient quit his/her tobacco use.
➔ Help your patient develop a quit plan.
➔ Set a quit date with your patient – ideally, within 2 weeks.
➔ Talk with your patient about the challenges he/she will face during the first few weeks.
➔ Encourage telling family, friends and co-workers about quitting for extra support.
➔ Suggest ways to cope with cravings.
➔ If available, refer to community cessation programs.
➔ If needed, recommend the use of approved pharmacotherapy.

ARRANGE: ➔ Schedule follow-up visits to review progress toward quitting.
  • Follow-up contact should occur soon after the quit date, preferably during the first week.
  • A second follow-up contact is recommended within the first month.
  • Schedule further follow-up contacts as needed.

Talk with your patients about quitting tobacco.

Nebraska Tobacco Quitline
QuitNow.ne.gov | 1-800-QUIT-NOW