

## NRT Myths and Facts

### ***“Nicotine is the harmful substance in cigarettes.”***

It is not nicotine, but the thousands of toxins present in tobacco smoke that are responsible for tobacco-related diseases.

### ***“NRT is addictive.”***

Cigarettes and e-cigarettes are addictive because smoking or vaping delivers nicotine to the brain in less than 10 seconds. NRT delivers nicotine slowly, which makes these products very unlikely to lead to dependence.

### ***“NRT products don’t work.”***

Often people try NRT and continue to smoke, and this leads people to think NRT doesn’t work for them. However, it probably means they weren’t getting enough nicotine to effectively manage withdrawal.

The Level of Nicotine Replacement is based on the number of cigarettes smoked per day. Larger doses of NRT may be necessary. NRT such as the gum, patch, inhaler, and lozenge can also be used together, and at the same time.

### ***“Smoking while on the patch causes heart attacks.”***

Using the patch and smoking at the same time does not increase cardiovascular risk. In fact, it is probably a sign that the person is not getting enough nicotine from the patch and should use additional NRT such as gum, lozenges, or inhaler.

### ***“The patch should be removed at bedtime.”***

The patch is a 24-hour product. Although some people experience sleep disturbance while wearing the patch, this usually only lasts for a couple of days. Patch users should try to wear the patch for 24 hours

## Thank you for keeping our premises smoke, vapour and tobacco free.

- Individuals with serious mental illness die, on average, 25 years prematurely, and tobacco-related diseases are the leading cause of death.
- Quitting smoking is associated with improved sobriety from other addictions, while continued smoking is associated with worse drug treatment outcomes.
- Smoke free facilities help patients experience life without tobacco, and many are surprised by how well they can manage without smoking.
- Stop Smoking medications such as Zyban and Champix can also be prescribed from your doctor and can be started one week before quitting cigarettes. These can also be combined with NRT for greater success.

FREE NRT available to any British Columbia resident. Talk to a Pharmacist.

To get quit support and more information:

**Visit [quitnow.ca](http://quitnow.ca) or**

**Call 1-877-455-2233**

[www.fraserhealth.ca](http://www.fraserhealth.ca)

This information does not replace the advice given to you by your healthcare provider.

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## Fraser Health Smoke, Vapour and Tobacco Free Policy

Mental Health & Substance Use



## Information for Patients and Visitors



## What is the policy?

Fraser Health Smoke, Vapour and Tobacco Free Policy aims to protect patients, clients, residents, visitors, Fraser Health employees, physicians, contracted staff and volunteers from the significant health risks of smoking and exposure to second-hand smoke or vapour.

The Mental Health & Substance Use units at Royal Columbian Hospital are committed to the goal of recovery with our patients. We hope that our Smoking Cessation Clinical Guidelines and Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRT) not only helps patients and visitors comply with our Smoke, Vapour and Tobacco Free Policy, but promotes wellness and recovery.

We know that tobacco use is the number one cause of preventable death and disease, and people with a serious mental illness are more likely to smoke, making our patients more vulnerable to the health consequence of tobacco use.

With respect to the policy, Fraser Health is taking a respectful and compassionate approach that considers individual choice and the needs of people who smoke and vape while at the same time protecting non-smokers, non-vapers, vulnerable patients, clients and residents.

## How are Patients and Visitors affected?

During your time at Royal Columbian Hospital as a patient or visitor, it will not be possible to smoke or vape on Royal Columbian Hospital property. We request that you comply with the Smoke, Vapour and Tobacco Free policy and help us provide a safe environment, free from the harms of second hand smoke and vapour, for everyone.

## During Hospital Stays

British Columbia law prohibits the distribution of tobacco and vapour products at a hospital or health care facility. This means our staff cannot store or dispense cigarettes, e-cigarettes or any other tobacco products for patients.

Your smoke, vape and tobacco products will be turned in upon admission and will be kept with secured personal belongings. Patients will not have access to these products until discharged from hospital, or granted a Therapeutic Leave where they can leave their smoke, vape and tobacco products at home.

**We ask all visitors to not bring tobacco and vapour products to patients when you visit.**

## How are We Supporting Patients to go Smoke-Free and Vapour-Free?

All patients will be informed of the policy when they are admitted. Patients will be reminded of the policy when they have passes to leave the unit.

Patients who were smoking or vaping before they came into the hospital will most likely experience some nicotine withdrawal while they are in the hospital and cannot get outside and off-grounds to smoke or vape. We can help. Staff can provide adequate Nicotine Replacement Therapy to effectively manage withdrawal symptoms and reduce the urge to smoke or vape.

NRT products are safe, and provide tobacco users with nicotine they would normally get from smoking tobacco.

Support for continued cessation after discharge is also available for patients who are interested.

Talk to your Doctor or Nurse about the options available after you leave hospital.

