

Your body will start to heal within 24 hours of quitting...

- 20 minutes after quitting, your blood pressure drops to your pre-cigarette level.
- 8 hours after quitting, the carbon monoxide in your blood drops to normal and the oxygen level in your blood increases to normal.
- 24 hours after quitting, you lower your chances of having a heart attack.
- 48 hours after quitting, your sense of smell and taste improves and begins to return to normal.
- 2 weeks to 3 months after quitting, your circulation improves and your lungs work better.
- 9 months after quitting, you experience less coughing, sinus congestion, fatigue and shortness of breath.
- 1 year after quitting, your risk of heart disease is about half of what it would have been if you had continued smoking.
- 5 years after quitting, your risk of stroke is greatly reduced. Within 5 to 15 years after quitting, it becomes about the same as a non-smoker's risk.

- 10 years after quitting, your risk of dying from lung cancer is about half of what it would have been if you had continued smoking. Your risk of cancer of the mouth, throat, esophagus, bladder, kidney and pancreas also decreases.
- 15 years after quitting, your risk of heart disease is the same as a person who never smoked.

Where can I get more information about smoking cessation services?

If you would like more information on how to quit smoking, please speak with your local health care provider (Physician, Health Educator, Public Health Nurse, or Employee Health Nurse) or call the Smokers' Helpline at 1-800-363-5864.

www.westernhealth.nl.ca/smokefree



OUR VISION

The vision of Western Health is that the people of Western Newfoundland have the highest level of health and well being possible.

SMOKE FREE

inside · outside · everywhere

**Questions and
answers about
the Smoke-Free
Policy.**



Western Health

In keeping with the mission, vision and values of Western Health, our grounds are smoke-free, effective July 1, 2008. This includes all owned or operated premises and facilities including the interior, exterior grounds and parking lots (including parked vehicles).

The goal of this policy is to create a healthy environment for employees, volunteers, clients, residents and visitors. As a health region, we have a responsibility to develop and support policies in the best interests of health and well-being.

Why can't individuals smoke outside Western Health facilities?

Smoking is a leading cause of disease and death. Second-hand smoke has been proven hazardous to people's health. As a healthcare provider, we believe our clients, visitors, employees, volunteers and our community at large will see a significant health benefit as a result of this new initiative. It is the right thing to do for our health.

How does this policy differ from our existing smoking policies/practices?

In the past, our policies and practices prohibited smoking inside our hospitals, but allowed smoking in outdoor smoking areas (i.e., beyond a certain area, marked in some places by a blue line). Effective July, 2008, all our grounds are smoke-free, including parking lots and private vehicles.



Does the policy apply to residents in long term care?

The new policy applies to everyone. The goal of the new policy is to ultimately work towards a 100% smoke-free environment, including long term care.

We realize that this change in long term care settings will take some time, and we are working towards alternatives and supports for residents who currently smoke.

What is Western Health doing to help employees/clients who smoke? Are there resources to help with the transition?

Western Health will have support and information available. Western Health has established a smoking cessation program. For more information please call the Health Education Consultant at (709) 637-5000, extension 5355.

Do employees/volunteers, clients and visitors have to quit smoking?

No. We are not forcing anyone to quit. We are saying that you cannot smoke on Western Health property. We have a responsibility to provide all employees and visitors with a safe and healthy environment.

What about individual rights?

Your individual right to choose to smoke is respected. You are not being asked to quit smoking. However, health authorities and other employers also have the right to create a healthy environment for those they serve. For this reason, we ask that individuals not smoke on our properties.

Can patients go off-site to smoke?

Patients who request to leave the property to smoke will be informed that the entire property is smoke-free and that by leaving the property to smoke, they are placing themselves at risk for medical complications.

There is also a risk of injury as hospital staff will not accompany people off the property. If a patient wishes to smoke, he/she will have to assume responsibility for his/her own safety.

I receive services in my home. Since this is my home, does the policy apply? Can't I smoke if I want?

As an employer, Western Health has a responsibility to protect its employees from the harmful effects of exposure to second-hand smoke. We ask that when our employees are providing a service in your home that you refrain from smoking at least one hour before our staff visit you, and while receiving care.