

BEHAVIORAL COUNSELING

Using medication together with behavioral counseling gives you the best chance of stopping tobacco use. Talk with your health care provider about the best medication for you.

WHAT DOES COUNSELING DO?

Behavioral counseling is when you talk with a health care provider about your tobacco or nicotine use and make a plan to get tobacco out of your life. This type of counseling helps you change your behaviors and routines to avoid using tobacco. It also can help you think differently about tobacco and your triggers.

HOW DO I USE IT?

An important part of counseling is figuring out what triggers your tobacco or nicotine use. Some of these triggers probably sound familiar:

- Talking on the phone
- Drinking a cup of coffee
- Drinking alcohol
- Feeling bored
- Needing a break
- Facing stress
- Having insomnia

Counseling will help you to figure out how you can avoid or cope with your triggers, so you don't start using tobacco again after you stop. For example, if you smoke with your morning coffee, your counselor may suggest that you have your coffee in a tobacco-free environment (such as a restaurant or a work kitchen) or switch to tea instead.

HOW DO I GET VA COUNSELING?

- **Contact your VA health care provider.** Tell them you are interested in working on changing your tobacco use. They can give you brief counseling as well as provide you with tobacco cessation medication. Your provider can also refer you to local tobacco use treatment clinics for individual and group counseling sessions.
- **Call the VA Quitline.** Speak with a Quit VET coach Monday–Friday, 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. Eastern. Dial **1-855-QUIT-VET** (1-855-784-8838). Are you ready to stop for good? Quit VET coaches can provide you with weekly check-in calls to troubleshoot difficulties and keep you on track.
- **Sign up for SmokefreeVET Text.** Get encouraging and informative messages with quick tips and advice via text. Text **VET** to **47848** or go to **Smokefree.gov/vet**.
- **Download the Stay Quit Coach Mobile Application.** Set goals to reduce or stop your tobacco use and track your progress with this smartphone app. To install, go to **mobile.va.gov/app/stay-quit-coach**.

If you are in crisis, dial 988 and press 1 to talk to someone now or text 838255.