

Treating Tobacco Use and Dependence: Five Major Steps to Intervention (The 5A's)

Successful intervention begins with identifying users and appropriate interventions based upon the patient's willingness to quit. The “5 A's” of treating tobacco dependence (Ask, Advise, Assess, Assist, and Arrange follow-up) is a useful way to understand tobacco dependence treatment and organize the clinical team to deliver that treatment.

Ask about tobacco use

Identify and document tobacco use status of every patient at every visit.

- Do you mind if we talk more about your smoking today?
- Do you currently use any type of tobacco products?

Advise to quit

In a clear, strong and personalized manner urge every tobacco user to quit.

- May I tell you what concerns I have about your smoking-tobacco use as it impacts your _____ condition?

Assess

For the current tobacco user, is the tobacco user willing to make a quit attempt at this time?

- How confident are you that you could attempt to quit?

For the ex-tobacco user, assess any barriers.

- How recently did you quit and are there any challenges to remaining abstinent?

Assist

- For the patient willing to make a quit attempt, offer medication and provide or refer for counseling or additional behavioral treatment to help the patient quit.
- For patients unwilling to quit at this time, provide motivational interventions designed to increase future quit attempts.
- For the recent quitter and any with remaining challenges, provide relapse prevention.
 - What kinds of support do you feel would help you quit?

Arrange

All those receiving the previous A's should receive follow-up.

- Can I help you find some resources to support you in quitting your smoking/tobacco use?