



Operation Quit Tobacco Fact Sheet

Operation Quit Tobacco (1-800-QUIT-NOW) is a program to help all Wisconsin military personnel and veterans quit smoking or chewing tobacco by providing **free** medication and coaching. Call the toll-free number or check out http://www.ctri.wisc.edu/Home/Quit_Line/OQT/oqt.html

Who: For **all** Wisconsin military personnel, including those on active duty, Wisconsin National Guard members, reservists and veterans.

What: A quit-tobacco program using a combination of medication and coaching. Free eight-week kits of nicotine-replacement patches, gum or lozenges are available to all military personnel who smoke or chew tobacco and want to quit. Operation Quit Tobacco participants also get information on local support programs, and on obtaining additional medications through the Veterans Administration, healthcare providers or other programs.

How: Wisconsin military personnel can obtain assistance by calling the Wisconsin Tobacco Quit Line, **1-800-QUIT-NOW**. The Quit Line offers free quit smoking and chewing coaching, which has been shown to dramatically increase quit rates, especially when combined with appropriate medications. Callers must call the Quit Line from a Wisconsin area code and identify themselves as members of the military to obtain the assistance.

When: Operation Quit Tobacco launched in November 2006. More than 500 Wisconsin military personnel have used the service to break free of tobacco addiction. The expanded program to provide even more assistance is available beginning in May 2009.

Why: Recent reports show that tobacco use rates among military personnel in the Iraqi and Afghanistan Wars are extremely high – 57 percent if they are deployed and 44 percent if they are non-deployed. Smoking rates among the general public are 19 percent.

Research shows that the combination of medication and coaching (like that provided by the Quit Line) dramatically increases the chances for successful quitting – by as much as four times. Most people making a quit attempt do not use this combination. Providing free starter kits helps smokers through the first weeks of quitting, which are typically the most difficult.

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