



Freedom From Smoking®

AMERICAN LUNG ASSOCIATION

Purpose

To help people who want to quit smoking

Target Population

Adult smokers who are ready to quit smoking

Goals

- To increase the number of adult smokers who are able to stop smoking
- To improve long-term cessation rates among adults quitting smoking

Years in Operation

1975 – present

Results

An unpublished American Lung Association study conducted during initial development of *Freedom From Smoking*® (FFS) found that 30 percent of 151 participants in the seven clinic sessions had not smoked cigarettes in the past month when interviewed one year after the end of the clinic. Nineteen percent of those reported complete abstinence from smoking over the full 12 months since the clinic. A larger internal evaluation study included 2,126 participants from 135 clinics, held from 1982 through 1985. Participants were interviewed one year after the conclusion of their FFS clinic, and the overall self-reported nonsmoking prevalence rate was 28.6 percent (with “nonsmoking” defined as not having smoked during the 30 days prior to the follow-up interview).

Subsequent evaluations of the program have found similar success rates among clinic participants a year after the program.

Rosenbaum and O’Shea measured the success of the *Freedom From Smoking*® clinic by studying 494 smokers who had participated in 42 FFS clinics held between October 1985 and June 1987 at locations in and around Buffalo, N.Y. Using a conservative “intent-to-treat” analysis, they found that 29 percent of all clinic participants were nonsmokers one year after their clinic. Quit rates were consistent across age, gender and number of clinic participants.

An evaluation study of *Freedom From Smoking*® Online was conducted in Wisconsin during 2001 and 2002. When questioned immediately after finishing the online clinic, 55 percent of participants reported they hadn’t smoked in the previous 24 hours. A full year after the program, 16.3 percent of participants reported they hadn’t smoked at all in the previous three months. While these results are encouraging, the study was quite small and additional research is needed.

Funding

The program is funded by the American Lung Association. Participants may have to pay registration fees to cover costs of local *Freedom from Smoking*[®] clinics.

Key Partners

American Lung Association; Freedom from Smoking clinics

What Works and Why

The program is research based and thoroughly evaluated. The program is regularly revisited and updated to incorporate the latest research and advances in cessation. Each participant develops an individualized quitting plan tailored to his or her needs. The program relies upon both individual and group participation, which facilitates support and accountability in working through the process and problems of quitting.

Structure and Operations

The *Freedom From Smoking*[®] group clinic consists of eight sessions designed to offer individuals a step-by-step plan for quitting smoking. The program focuses almost exclusively on *how* to quit, not *why* to quit, using a positive behavior change approach. Each clinic session uses techniques based on pharmacological and psychological principles and methods designed to help smokers gain control over their behavior. The clinic format encourages individuals to work on the process and problems of quitting not only individually but also as a group.

The initial clinic sessions help smokers determine their readiness to quit and figure out what triggers their urges to smoke. Each participant then develops a personalized quitting plan in preparation for his or her quit day. Following that session's quitting ceremony, the remainder of the clinic covers symptoms of recovery, controlling weight gain, managing stress, relaxation techniques, resisting the urge to smoke and preventing relapse.

Each clinic facilitator is a nonsmoker or ex-smoker and has completed a workshop conducted by an American Lung Association-certified Freedom From Smoking[®] trainer. The day-and-a-half training includes instruction on understanding triggers for smoking, creating a quit plan, nicotine addiction and withdrawal, the importance of social support, coping with stress, weight management and preventing relapse. The registration fee (if any) charged to clinic participants is determined at the local level and varies depending on factors including available funding and clients' ability to pay. *Freedom From Smoking*[®] Online is available free of charge at <http://www.ffsonline.org>.

Barriers to Success

Relapse rates are high among smokers, and many require multiple attempts to quit before succeeding.

For More Information

Additional information is available online:

<http://www.lungusa.org/site/pp.asp?c=dvLUK9O0E&b=39240>