

# Tips for Quitting

Whether you are diabetic or not, you can enjoy many health benefits when you quit commercial tobacco use. Here are some helpful hints to help get you started.

- **MAKE THE DECISION TO QUIT.** List your reasons for quitting, and place the list where you can see it often.
- **SET YOUR QUIT DATE.** Circle your quit date on a calendar.
- **GET PREPARED.** Throw away your cigarettes, chew, lighters, ashtrays, and spit cans. For your weaker moments, buy raw vegetables or other healthy snacks.
- **GET HELP.** Your doctor can provide you with helpful ways to quit. Choose a method that you think will work best for you.
- **MAKE A PLAN.** Think about how you will handle your weaker moments. For example, if you typically crave a cigarette after a meal, plan to walk instead.
- **AWAKEN YOUR INNER SPIRIT.** Begin participating in traditional activities such as weaving, dancing, beading, praying, making a gift for a friend, and taking nature walks.
- **GET SUPPORT.** Ask for support from your partner, family and friends.
- **REWARD YOURSELF.** Celebrate your success in quitting commercial tobacco, and make your ancestors proud.

Contact your local clinic for more information on commercial tobacco cessation and diabetes.

Chapa-De Indian Health Program  
530-867-2800

Greenville Rancheria Health Clinic  
530-284-6135

Karuk Tribal Health  
530-493-5257

Mathiesen Memorial Health Clinic  
209-984-4820

Pit River Health Services  
520-335-3561

Redding Rancheria Tribal Health Center  
530-224-2700

Sonoma County Indian Health Project  
707-521-4500

Toiyabe Indian Health Project  
760-873-8461

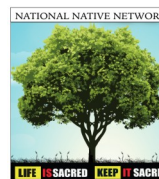
Tule River Indian Health Center  
559-784-2316

United Indian Health Services  
707-825-5000

Warner Mountain Indian Health  
530-279-6194



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# Diabetes and Commercial Tobacco Use



This information is intended for educational purposes only and is not intended to replace consultation with a health care professional  
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## About Diabetes

Diabetes occurs when the body does not produce enough insulin, does not produce it well, or both. When your body is not getting enough insulin, glucose (sugar) starts to build up in your blood. Over time, this can lead to a stroke, heart attack, heart disease, kidney disease, blindness, nerve damage, and amputation.

According to a 2014 report by the California Tribal Epidemiology Center (CTEC), 20% of American Indians and Alaskan Natives in California have diabetes. In that group, 20% currently use commercial tobacco.

## About Commercial Tobacco

Many American Indians view tobacco as sacred. It is a gift from the creator. When used in a sacred and traditional way, tobacco has the power to heal, to carry prayers, and be given as a gift. Traditional tobacco is grown in a traditional way and used traditionally according to the beliefs of each tribe.



However, when it is abused, it also has the power to make you sick. Commercial tobacco is grown and

harvested in a way that creates nitrosamines. Nicotine levels are manipulated to cause addiction to commercial tobacco. Other cancer causing agents are added to commercial tobacco products such as cigarettes, cigars, chew, and snuff to help make the taste of the products more mellow and to make the smoke less irritating.

## Commercial Tobacco and Diabetes

- Sugar is added to cigarettes and chewing tobacco, most diabetics are unaware of this hidden sugar.
- Nicotine in cigarettes and other commercial tobacco products causes insulin resistance and leads to unstable blood sugar levels.
- Commercial tobacco causes blood vessels to constrict, making your heart work harder to pump blood. It also causes clogged arteries. Uncontrolled blood sugar levels cause narrowing of blood vessels. Combined, this can lead to heart attack and stroke.
- It is more likely that you will experience even more problems with your eyesight from Commercial tobacco smoke getting in your eyes.
- Using commercial tobacco will increase your risk of tooth loss and developing gum disease.
- Smoking triples your chances of developing kidney disease.
- Commercial tobacco will increase the risk of nerve damage in all parts of your body and causing numbness and pain for diabetics.
- Diabetics who use commercial tobacco are more likely to have blocked blood vessels which can result in amputation.
- You are three times more likely to die of heart disease if you have diabetes and use commercial tobacco.

## Worried about Weight Gain?

One of the most common reasons that people do not quit commercial tobacco is the fear of gaining weight. It is true that on average, when a person quits smoking, they gain 6-10 pounds. However, the health benefits of quitting smoking greatly outweigh the risks. You would have to gain 100 pounds after quitting to have the same health risks as you did when using commercial tobacco.



To help prevent weight gain, begin to focus on a healthy lifestyle. Incorporate more fruits and vegetables into your diet. Eat vegetables such as celery and carrots, when having the urge to use commercial tobacco. Begin eating more traditional foods such as acorns, berries, fish, and game. Increase your physical activity. If you used to having a cigarette after dinner, go for a walk or run instead. Explore Mother Earth. Engage in traditional activities such as dancing, weaving, fishing, hunting, and/or gardening. Play with your kids.

If you are worried about weight gain, concentrate on quitting commercial tobacco first, and then weight loss. People that try to diet and quit commercial tobacco at the same time, often fail at both.

