

How long before my operation should I quit smoking?

The earlier you quit the better. Research shows that quitting six to eight weeks before your surgery significantly reduces the risk of infection.

Even if you don't have this much time before your operation, shorter periods of smoke-free time can still help you.

The more smokefree time you have before surgery, the greater the benefits to you.

“Quitting smoking makes a big difference to the success of your surgery and your future health.”

Contact Us:



Addressing smoking
Lifting the health of Aucklanders

09 307 4949 ext 26591 or
0800 667833 and leave a message

Alternatively you may wish to contact the
following services for free support:

Quitline

0800 778 778

Ngati Whatua Aukati Kai Paipa

09 578 0967

Pacific Quit

0800 867 848

Your own GP can also assist

You can quit, give it a go
and we can help you



2 Park Road, Grafton, Auckland 1142

Stop before the op



Why you should quit smoking before surgery

“Stopping smoking before surgery means better and faster healing and reduces the chance of infection.”

The best thing you can do
for your health is stop smoking



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How to quit before surgery

Whilst you are in the clinic ask your nurse or doctor to refer you to ADHB Smokefree Services.

They will contact you to discuss the best way for you to quit. They can also provide you with vouchers to purchase highly subsidised nicotine patches, gum or lozenges and refer you to specialist community groups for ongoing support. Using patches, gum and lozenges and getting support doubles your chances of quitting.

“Quitting smoking is one of the best ways to improve your health and lifestyle.”

Improving your health before, during and after surgery

Smoking increases the risk of problems during and after your surgery.

Quitting smoking before surgery may mean less time in hospital, a faster recovery and benefits for your future health.

“Quitting smoking now is a step to a smokefree life.”

Smokefree Policy

Auckland District Health Board has a Smokefree Policy that requires anyone who wishes to smoke to do so outside of building and off-site. People who suddenly stop smoking will experience urges to smoke within 24 hours. Nicotine patches, gum and lozenges are provided to prevent these nicotine withdrawal symptoms.

Results from quitting smoking

Within 20 minutes:

Your heart rate and blood pressure drops.

Within 1-2 hours: The carbon monoxide level in your blood drops to normal.

Within a day: Almost all of the nicotine is out of your blood stream.

Within 1-3 days: Your risk of a heart attack or stroke begins to drop.

Within a week: Your lungs' natural cleaning system will start to recover and become better at removing mucus, tar and dust

What does research say about quitting smoking before surgery?

People who smoke are almost 50% more likely to get a wound infection after surgery. Severe infections can be life-threatening.

Even minor infections can mean antibiotics and a longer stay in hospital.

“Quitting smoking before surgery will reduce your risk of getting an infection.”

Smokers take longer to heal. If you quit smoking, your heart and lungs will work better to help you through the surgery process. Your blood will carry more oxygen around your body, helping you to heal faster.

