

harmonization

WORKING TOGETHER FOR CANCER PREVENTION 

working together IN THE NORTH



The Canadian Cancer Society, the BC Cancer Agency and Northern Health along with researchers at the University of British Columbia and Athabasca University are collaborating on an exciting new program and research initiative funded by the Canadian Cancer Society.

The goal is to reduce the incidence of cancer through strengthening and advancing cancer prevention programs in northern British Columbia.

The Harmonization team will use a new approach in working together to reach more people and improve cancer prevention. Two innovative projects will be conducted by the team:

- **Stop Smoking Before Surgery** is an initiative to increase awareness of the benefits of stopping and to support patients in their decision to stop smoking before surgery. This project will be implemented in Prince George and Prince Rupert.
- **Men's Healthy Eating and Active Living** is an initiative that will be implemented in two communities (Prince George and Dawson Creek) and include activities to promote healthy eating and active living tailored for northern men.

The team will evaluate the success of these initiatives, and the strategies used to work together to deliver the programs. The findings will inform and guide the Canadian Cancer Society's future work to promote cancer prevention.

Visit www.harmonization.ok.ubc.ca to learn more.

This research is funded by the Canadian Cancer Society (grant #701259-00)

“ **1/2**
About
of all cancers can be prevented
by making lifestyle changes,
such as stop smoking, physical
activity, and healthy eating. ”

- Dr. Ronald Chapman, Vice President,
Medicine and Clinical Programs,
Northern Health

for more information:

Dr. Cherisse Seaton

Research Coordinator, Harmonization Project

Email: Cherisse.Seaton@ubc.ca

Phone: 250-649-7138

Centre for Healthy Living

1788 Diefenbaker Drive,
Prince George, BC V2N 4V7

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stop smoking before surgery

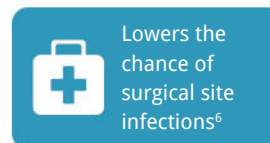
Why now?

Northern BC has the highest rate of cancer death compared to other health regions in BC.¹ The smoking rate is 24%, much higher than the provincial average of 14%², and the region has the highest rate of lung cancer³. Avoiding tobacco has been shown to be one of the most important ways to reduce one's lifetime risk of developing and dying from cancer⁴.

Surgery provides incentive and a *timeline* to stop smoking

Heightened concerns about one's health prior to non-emergency surgery presents as an important time to provide smoking cessation counseling. The pilot program will support health professionals to consistently provide advice and counseling with patients who smoke. A smoking cessation program prior to surgery aligns with current efforts in Northern Health to expand hospital-based smoking cessation services, and with the BC Ministry of Health's recent initiative to provide smoking cessation aids (i.e., low-cost prescription Champix™ or Zyban™ and free nicotine gum or patch).

Stopping smoking before surgery:



- 1 British Columbia Vital Statistics Agency. (2011). Summary Statistics by Health Authority, British Columbia, 2007–2011 In *Selected Vital Statistics and Health Status Indicators: One Hundred and Fortieth Annual Report*.
- 2 Northern Health. (2012). *Position on Tobacco reduction. An integrated population health report*.
- 3 BC Cancer Agency. (2012) *British Columbia 2011 Regional Cancer Report. Population Oncology*.
- 4 Gapstur SM, Thun MJ. (2010). Progress in the war on cancer. *The Journal of the American Medical Association*, 303, 1084-1085.
- 5 Wong, J. et al. (2012). Short-term preoperative smoking cessation and postoperative complications: A systemic review and meta-analysis. *Canadian Journal of Anesthesia*, 59, 268-279.
- 6 Serensen, L.T. (2012). Wound healing and infection in surgery. The clinical impact of smoking and smoking cessation: A systemic review and meta-analysis. *Archives of Surgery*, 147, 373-383.

Get involved!

Most smokers want to quit. Elective surgery provides an opportunity to re-open discussions about quitting. Health professionals are in a key position to provide support for tobacco cessation before, during and following surgery. Interested in being involved? Visit www.harmonization.ok.ubc.ca to learn more.

“ My surgeon asked me if I smoked and my answer was yes. I realized that this addiction had me in its grasp, and would put me at risk during and after surgery. I threw out my last pack of cigarettes and for the last 38 years haven't smoked once. Surgery was my time to quit. ”

- Dr. Charles Jago, Northern Health Board Chair

Smoking cessation resources:

www.QuitNow.ca or call 8-1-1 toll free

For information about **smoking cessation aids**:

<http://www.health.gov.bc.ca/pharma/care/stop-smoking/>

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