## Individual behavioural counselling helps people to quit smoking

### Clinical Question
Compared to no treatment or brief advice, how effective is individual behavioural counselling in promoting smoking cessation?

### Bottom Line
There was high-quality evidence that individually-delivered smoking cessation counselling assisted smokers to quit. Individual counselling increased the chances of quitting by between 40% and 80%, compared to minimal support. There was moderate-quality evidence of a smaller relative benefit when counselling was used in addition to pharmacotherapy compared to people using pharmacotherapy alone. There is a suggestion that intensive counselling compared to a brief counselling intervention maybe better. The few studies that compared different types of counselling did not show any differences between them.

### Caveat
Almost half the trials recruited people in hospital settings, but there was no evidence of heterogeneity of results in different settings. There was a range of smoking cessation counsellors including health educators and psychologists.

### Context
Individual counselling is commonly used to help people who are trying to quit smoking. The review looked at trials of counselling by a trained therapist providing one or more face-to-face sessions, separate from medical care. The outcome was being a non-smoker at least six months later.

### Cochrane Systematic Review
Lancaster T and Stead LF. Individual behavioural counselling for smoking cessation. Cochrane Reviews, 2017, Issue 3. Art. No.: CD001292. DOI: 10.1002/14651858.CD001292.pub3. This review contains 49 studies involving around 19,000 participants.

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