



*NOTE TO MEDIA:* Please contact us if you would like to connect with a local expert for a follow-up interview. This story and additional reports are available at our Online News Room by visiting <https://www.nysmokefree.com/NewsRoom>.

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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- *Smokers could experience greater risk of complications from COVID-19*
- *Social distancing can provide an opportunity to curb or quit smoking altogether*
- *Resources to curb nicotine cravings are available at [nysmokefree.com](http://nysmokefree.com)*

## **HOW TO CURB SMOKING AND VAPING DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC**

*COVID-19 is stressful, but the New York State Smokers' Quitline reminds former and current smokers and vapers to transition to healthier routines*

**BUFFALO, N.Y. – Apr. 6, 2020** – Uncertain times during the COVID-19 pandemic will create prolonged stress and anxiety throughout New York State and beyond. For those who smoke tobacco products or vape using electronic nicotine delivery systems (ENDS), the New York State Smokers' Quitline (Quitline) has a clear message in today's ever-changing world: remember that online resources are available to help curb your use or quit altogether.

While talking with a healthcare professional is the best first step one can take for treating nicotine dependence, many factors may prevent face-to-face consultations for the foreseeable future. As an alternative, [nysmokefree.com](http://nysmokefree.com) provides self-support resources for how to curb nicotine use and ultimately stay quit. Helpful sections of the website include pages on managing stress, identifying triggers and dealing with slips or relapse.

Curbing or stopping nicotine-use is critical in during the COVID-19 pandemic. Ongoing [research](#) suggests smokers and vapers are at [greater risk](#) of developing a serious infection from the coronavirus. Smoking and vaping compromises the body's respiratory system, which is a primary attack target for [COVID-19](#).

As New York State residents adjust to disruptions in their daily routines, the advent of social distancing could be a silver lining for those seeking to reduce the use of tobacco products or ENDS. Increased time with non-smoking family members at home and decreased time at trigger-environments may help a smoker focus on learning how to quit or stay quit.

Conversely, some may experience stress due to feelings of confinement. When nicotine urges strike, the Quitline suggests engaging in alternative activities such as going for a walk, chewing on a cinnamon stick or doing a crossword puzzle. Many former smokers who received help through the Quitline mention the "Five D's" system to be particularly helpful: delay, distract yourself, drink water, deep breaths and discuss feelings.

Coping with ongoing stress due to disruptions from COVID-19 can be challenging. Becoming or staying tobacco-free can help ease this burden, especially by adapting to healthier routines. In addition to the resources at [nysmokefree.com](#), Quit Coaches also continue to be available daily via phone by calling 1-866-NY-QUITS (1-866-697-8487).

### **About the New York State Smokers' Quitline**

The New York State Smokers' Quitline is a service of the New York State Department of Health and based at Roswell Park Comprehensive Cancer Center in Buffalo, N.Y. It is one of the first and busiest state quitlines in the nation and has responded to nearly 3 million calls since it began operating in 2000. The Quitline encourages nicotine users to talk with their healthcare professionals and access available Medicaid or health insurance benefits for stop-smoking medications. All New York State residents can call **1-866-NY-QUITS** (1-866-697-8487) for coaching and resources, free of charge, seven days a week beginning at 9 a.m. Visit [www.nysmokefree.com](#) for more information.

### **About Roswell Park Comprehensive Cancer Center**

Roswell Park Comprehensive Cancer Center is a community united by the drive to eliminate cancer's grip on humanity by unlocking its secrets through personalized approaches and unleashing the healing power of hope. Founded by Dr. Roswell Park in 1898, it is the only National Cancer Institute-designated comprehensive cancer center in Upstate New York. Learn more at [www.roswellpark.org](#), or contact us at 1-800-ROSWELL (1-800-767-9355) or [ASKRoswell@roswellpark.org](mailto:ASKRoswell@roswellpark.org).