

# Inova TobaccoNET Relapse Prevention

Relapsing means the compulsion to use tobacco overwhelms your efforts to continue your recovery. The relapse process begins when you begin to consider tobacco use a viable option. This can happen long before you actually use tobacco. The relapse process can be stopped if you recognize it and are willing to take the action necessary to avoid tobacco use again.

Developing a relapse prevention plan does not mean you are anticipating a relapse; it means that you are aware that a relapse can occur. It is important to know how you will handle those times when you are tempted to use tobacco again. You can prevent relapse once you recognize the signs/symptoms. The following questions may help you determine if you're headed toward relapse.

Are you starting to:

- Fantasize about using tobacco?
- Imagine what it would be like to use tobacco again?
- Long for the days when you relied on tobacco to cope?
- Think about how great tobacco would taste with coffee or after a meal?
- Hold pens or straws between your fingers the same way you used to hold a cigarette?
- Think smoking is the only way to keep your weight down?
- Long for the days when you relaxed with tobacco?
- Think "just once" wouldn't hurt?

It is natural to have these thoughts on occasion, particularly in the early days of quitting. However, if the thoughts continue to stay on your mind and you do not take the necessary steps to redirect your thinking towards recovery, you may be heading toward relapse. Remember, the addiction to nicotine is powerful and cunning! Use all your ammunition to fight back!

There are certain situations and feelings that most tobacco users have identified as crisis points which led to relapsing into old habits. The problem may not be that you physically crave nicotine, but that this situation is one with which you used to cope by using tobacco. Now that you are tobacco-free, you may find yourself tempted to return to the comfort tobacco gave you.

Some common situations to watch out for are:

- Negative emotions such as anger, tension, worry, frustration and boredom
- Conflict with another person or job pressure
- Social gatherings, especially when drinking alcohol around others who are using tobacco
- Relaxing at home, after a meal

Be prepared....make a plan.