

## Free smoking cessation program

Since its launch in 2011, the smoking cessation program has already processed more than a hundred thousand orders from British Columbians.

Any BC resident who holds a Care Card can call 8-1-1 HealthLink BC (which provides multilingual services including Chinese) to consult with a nurse and receive a reference number. He or she may then provide this number to the pharmacy to receive a free smoking cessation product. A person is entitled to pick up 28 day supply each time, then must call 8-1-1 again to obtain a new reference number for the next fill.

For each calendar year, a person is only subsidized for 12 CONSECUTIVE weeks of free nicotine products, which is equivalent to 9 boxes of Thrive nicotine gums or 12 boxes of Habitrol nicotine patches; please note that Nicoderm patches and Nicorette gums are not covered. On January 1 of every year, each person's coverage starts afresh and is entitled to another 12 weeks supply.

Champix (or varenicline) and Zyban (or bupropion) are two medications that help to stop smoking; both of them require prescriptions from the doctor. Coverage for these two drugs works in the same way as other prescription items through Fair Pharmacare.

If you have any questions, feel free to call 8-1-1, or browse through the Smoking Cessation Program website from the BC Ministry of Health:

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

