Helping Young Smokers Quit

Study participants who received telephone quitline counseling were more likely to quit smoking.

**Description:** Although 80 percent of smokers become daily smokers before age 20, few evidence-based tobacco cessation interventions have been developed for younger smokers. **Partnering with Quitlines to Promote Youth Smoking Cessation in Wisconsin** evaluated the effectiveness of an age-appropriate telephone quitline counseling intervention to help adolescent and young adult smokers quit.

**Results:** Regional outreach specialists at the University of Wisconsin Tobacco Research and Intervention mobilized youth throughout the state to help publicize this study and the availability of telephone-based smoking cessation counseling for young adult smokers. The study showed that quitline-based counseling may benefit young adults by spurring them to set a quit date and by increasing one-month abstinence rates in those who smoke fewer than 10 cigarettes per day. Results also showed that individuals who used cessation medication and received quitline counseling were more likely to quit. Young adult smokers (18 to 24 years of age) were much more willing to enroll in the study than adolescents; 410 of 462 enrollees were young adults.

**Published Article:** Sims, T.H., McAfee, T., Fraser, D.L., Baker, T.B., Fiore, M.C., Smith, S.S. "Quitline cessation counseling for young adult smokers: a randomized clinical trial." *Nicotine & Tobacco Research*, in press.

**Next Steps:** This study was not designed to evaluate cessation medications for younger smokers, a potential area for future research. The difficulty in recruiting adolescent smokers points to the need for more creative approaches for engaging teens in smoking cessation, as well as evidence-based policies that make it less likely for youth to initiate smoking, such as 100 percent clean indoor air laws, higher tobacco product prices and strong counter-advertising mass media campaigns.

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**Partnering with Quitlines to Promote Youth Smoking Cessation in Wisconsin**

**Principal Investigator:** Tammy Harris Sims, MD, MS, Pediatrics, SMPH

**Grant Program:** New Investigator

**Award:** $100,000 over two years