



Quitting to Win: A Roadmap to Beat Nicotine and Tobacco Use in the Military

Warfighters need to be always ready—but do you know the impact of nicotine and tobacco use on your performance and how you can stay or get in optimal health by quitting?

Tobacco and nicotine create a direct threat to military readiness, with 22% of active-duty personnel reporting recent use in 2023.¹

There are many negative effects from tobacco and nicotine, including decreased physical fitness, changes in perception and thinking, and higher rates of injury alongside slow recovery.² These effects interact with military-specific challenges like deployment stress. There is also a misconception that tobacco and nicotine can help you stay focused. Both can weaken operational effectiveness and your personal mission of quitting to win.

There is no wrong time to quit.¹ Supports are ready when you are, wherever you are. If you don't use tobacco or nicotine, stay ready and maintain optimal health. If you do, get ready to quit. A tobacco and nicotine-free force is a ready force. Use the resources below to advance the mission.



If you are a **line leader**, remember that every training and health briefing is an opportunity to move individuals on your team toward change by promoting the importance of a tobacco-free ready force and sharing information about available resources.

Remember to reinforce targeted policies and interventions during vulnerable periods, such as advanced training and deployment. It is crucial to frame quit efforts and decisions as a readiness enhancer and reduce the impact of tobacco use across the force.



If you are a **healthcare provider** working with a service member not yet ready to quit, remember to use motivational interviewing and other practice guideline strategies to engage them and plan treatment.



If you are a concerned **peer or family member** of someone who uses nicotine or tobacco, educate yourself about effective ways to support your warrior or improve your own health using the resources provided.

Resource	Who is Eligible	Services Offered	How to Contact
YouCanQuit2	- Service members - Family members - Health professionals	Department of War campaign offering educational materials, a digital quit plan, and optional text messaging support.	Visit: ycq2.org
Smokefree.gov	- Service members - Family members - Veterans	Department of Health and Human Services effort to reduce smoking rates in the United States. Offers personalized digital quit plans, resources for family members to support their loved one, and specialized websites for veterans and teens.	Visit: smokefree.gov Veterans can visit: veterans.smokefree.gov
1800QuitNOW	- Service members - Family members - Veterans	A national portal of state quitlines coordinated with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention that offer evidence-based support like counseling, referrals to local programs, and in some cases free cessation medications to people who want to quit tobacco.	Call: 1-800-QUIT-NOW (1-800-784-8669) Text: QUITNOW to 333888 Visit: cdc.gov/tobacco/tobacco-features/quitlines.html Call: 1-855-QUIT-VET (1-855-784-8838) Visit: mentalhealth.va.gov/quit-tobacco/quit-vet.asp
Primary Care Clinic	- Service members - Family members - Veterans	Primary care providers are your point of contact for preventative and routine healthcare including treatment for tobacco use, if needed. TRICARE and VA benefits cover many tobacco cessation medications at no cost, both prescription and non-prescription, if ordered by a provider.	Service members: tricare.mil/GettingCare/FindDoctor/ChangePCM Local military treatment facilities may offer tobacco cessation programs: health.mil/Military-Health-Topics/Access-Cost-Quality-and-Safety/Military-Hospitals-and-Clinics Veterans: va.gov/find-locations
Mental Health Clinic	- Service members - Family members - Veterans	Mental health clinics provide services focused on prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of a person's mental well-being. They may be used for treatment of tobacco use, especially if you're experiencing other mental health conditions. TRICARE and VA benefits cover many tobacco cessation medications at no cost, both prescription and non-prescription, if ordered by a provider.	Service members: health.mil/Military-Health-Topics/Access-Cost-Quality-and-Safety/Military-Hospitals-and-Clinics Veterans: va.gov/find-locations
Military OneSource	- Service members - Family members - Veterans	Military OneSource offers a wide range of individualized consultations, coaching and non-medical counseling for many aspects of military life, including transition support for veterans. It may be helpful if general stressors are contributing to tobacco use.	To call, live chat, or connect 24/7 visit: militaryonesource.mil/connect
Psychological Health Center of Excellence Clinical Support Tools	- Service members - Line leaders - Health professionals - Family members - Veterans	Clinical support tools condense clinical practice guideline materials, highlight critical information, and present it in an easy to understand format.	Visit: health.mil/Military-Health-Topics/Centers-of-Excellence/Psychological-Health-Center-of-Excellence/PHCoE-Clinician-Resources/Clinical-Support-Tools

Additional Resources



Military OneSource provides 24/7 support and information on housing, financial, legal, medical, and psychological services.

- CONUS: 800-342-9647
- OCONUS and collect options available at: militaryonesource.mil



Military/Veterans Crisis Line provides free, confidential resource for those in crisis that is available 24/7. Dial 988, then press 1 to talk with a counselor or text 838255 for live chat. OCONUS options available. militarycrisisline.net



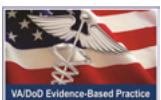
988 provides free and confidential support for individuals in crisis. If you or someone you know is struggling or in crisis, call or text 988. 988lifeline.org



Real Warriors Campaign provides resources to decrease stigma, increase psychological health literacy, and open doors to access to care. health.mil/RealWarriors

References

1. Veterans Affairs and Department of Defense. (2026). *VA/DOD Clinical Practice Guideline for Tobacco Use Treatment*. Version 3.0. www.healthquality.va.gov/HEALTHQUALITY/guidelines/CD/tobacco/Tobacco-Cessation-CPG_2026-Guideline_final_20260109.pdf
2. Department of Defense. (2022, May 16). Health Promotion and Disease Prevention. (DOD Instruction 1010.10).



Department of Veterans Affairs and Department of War healthcare providers who use this information are responsible for considering all applicable regulations and policies throughout the course of care and patient education. Created August 2026 by the Defense Health Agency's Psychological Health Center of Excellence.