



# LEAVE THE PACK BEHIND

Campus-Based Brief Tobacco Intervention Bulletin

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## Special Interest:

- **Smokers' preferred cessation methods: Results from 15 Ontario universities**
- 'Reframing' quit advice to appeal to smokers
- **Campus doctors & nurses are preferred sources of support for quitting**

## What Do Smokers Want? LTPB's recent study offers some answers

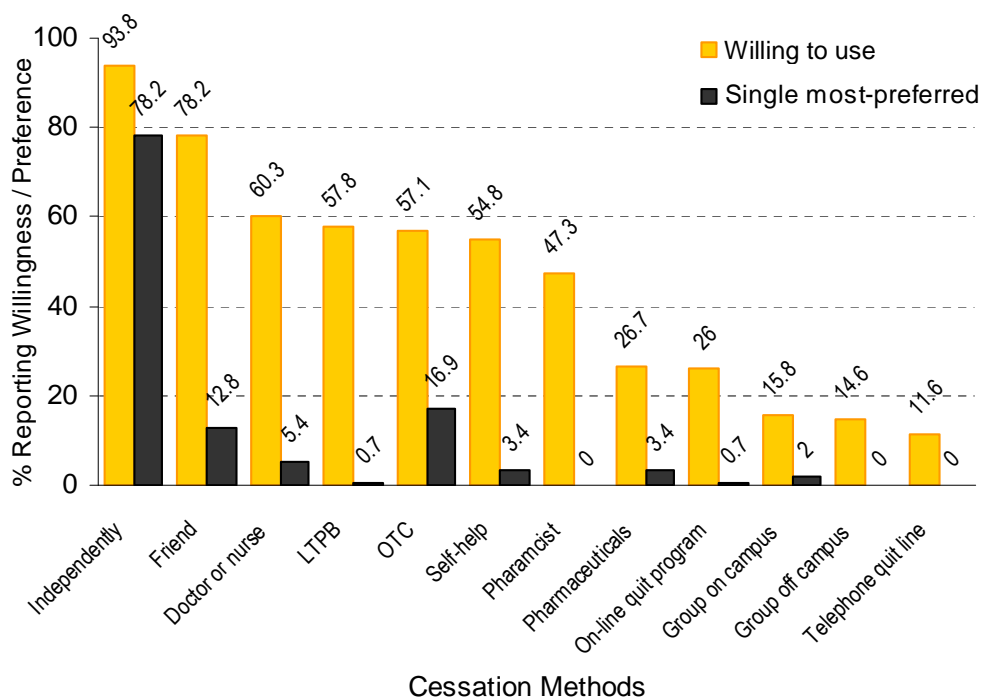
According to the 2007 Canadian Tobacco Use Monitoring Survey,<sup>1</sup> 14% of 15-19 year olds and 22% of 20-24 year olds in Ontario are self-identified smokers. On Ontario campuses, approximately 22% of university and 33% of college students report daily or occasional tobacco use.<sup>2</sup> Many young adult smokers will continue to use tobacco products into adulthood unless they are offered some form of intervention.<sup>3</sup>

With a census sample of students using their campus health services, LTPB investigated:

- which cessation methods they are willing to use
- which smoking cessation method is their single most-preferred
- whether most-preferred cessation method is related to gender, smoking frequency, stage of change, previous quit attempts
- from whom they would seek smoking cessation information.

On 15 Ontario university campuses, every student who accessed the campus health clinic on one of two days was invited to take part in a study of *Lifestyle Behaviours and Use of Campus Services*. Approximately 3,500 invitations were issued. Of the 2,203 students who accepted the invitation, 1,195 (54%) completed the on-line questionnaire. The final sample included 151 students who self-reported smoking in the past month.

**Smokers who Use University Clinics (N = 151) Identify Cessation Methods They are Willing to Use, and would Most-Prefer to Use**



## Contributors

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## What else did smokers say?

Smokers' single most-preferred cessation method was *not* significantly associated with:

- gender [ $\chi^2(5, N=143) = 5.992, p = .307$ ]
- stage of change [ $\chi^2(10, N=145) = 9.894, p = .450$ ]
- smoking frequency in the past month [ $\chi^2(5, N=148) = 6.422, p = .267$ ]
- whether a quit attempt had been made in the past year [ $\chi^2(10, N=146) = 16.483, p = .087$ ]

Of interest, when smokers were presented with a list and asked who they would want to talk to about smoking cessation:

- 36.0% chose campus clinic doctors
- 20.7% chose on-campus personal counselors
- 9.3% chose campus clinic nurses
- 7.3% chose off-campus health professionals
- 4.7% chose student residence staff or peer educator
- 1.3% chose on-campus therapist

The remaining smokers (20.7%) indicated they would not talk to a health professional.

## How to Help Smokers Who Want to Quit Independently

Although a majority of smokers (78.2%) indicated that quitting independently was their single-most preferred method of cessation, substantial proportions of smokers were willing to obtain assistance from a friend, speak with a doctor or nurse, and use LTPB support. Additionally, many smokers expressed a willingness to use an over-the-counter product (such as gum or patch), or a self-help manual.

*“Independent quitting” is often more of a perception than a reality.* Smokers who report quitting independently have often received medical advice to

quit, relied on the support of family and friends, or used self-help resources, educational materials, and other quit aides.

By ‘re-framing’ advice to quit, health professionals can offer smokers effective assistance while supporting their perceptions that they are quitting smoking independently:

*“I recommend using nicotine gum... It will help you to quit on your own.”*

*“This package (of LTPB materials) will help you to quit on your own.”*

*“It can be helpful to ask a friend for support when you are quitting smoking on your own.”*



It’s important to remember that 36% smokers in this study identified doctors and 9% identified nurses as the campus professional with whom they want to discuss smoking cessation. In just 30 seconds, you can effectively advise smokers to quit smoking and offer them assistance to do so in the form of the LTPB clinic package. Students trust the advice of campus health professionals; and believe professionals can provide the help they need to quit.

Special thanks to **Katie Sharp**, BA(Hons). Under the guidance of Dr. Lawrance, Katie helped conceptualize this study; and then analyzed the data and interpreted the results for her undergraduate thesis. Katie is now doing graduate work at the University of Waterloo.

<sup>1</sup> CTUMS (2007). [http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/hl-vs/tobac-tabac/research-recherche/stat/\\_ctums-esutc\\_2007/ann-table2-eng.php](http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/hl-vs/tobac-tabac/research-recherche/stat/_ctums-esutc_2007/ann-table2-eng.php)

<sup>2</sup> Lawrance, Jessup, Welk, Dupuis (2006). Raw data from an online survey of 6,736 university students and 1,737 college students in Ontario.

<sup>3</sup> Gilpin, White, Pierce. What fraction of young adults are at risk for future smoking, and who are they? *Nicotine Tob Res* 2005;7:747-59