



CIGNA Behavioral Health

*With a Little
Help From
Your Friends*



Self-Help Groups for Smokers

While some smokers may be able to quit on their own, others find the reassurance and encouragement of a group an indispensable aid in kicking the habit. Group support can be a big help toward achieving a smoke-free existence.

Where to Find Them

Your doctor or any other health professional should be able to give you information on what's available in your community. The phone book is another source. Before you decide to sign on with one, you might want to call a few of the groups listed to learn how they operate. Perhaps a friend can make a recommendation.

Who They Are

Some support groups are operated as a business for profit. They may or may not be run by health professionals.

Other groups are operated by hospitals or nonprofit organizations. Just about all of them will

charge you a fee, but remember you will save a lot of money by quitting.

So, in the long run, you'll be ahead. Some companies have an employee assistance policy which may help you with the fees or provide its own in-house program.

A five-day program sponsored by the Seventh Day Adventist church has won wide acclaim while others are available through the American Lung Association. For-profit groups include Schick, Smok-Enders and Smoke Watchers.

How They Help

It's immensely helpful to be with a group of people who are all working toward the same goal. In a support group each participant experiences the same difficulties, the same withdrawal symptoms and the same nicotine cravings.

You'll be able to talk through your problems and find out how other people handle the same situation. You'll learn from one another and give mutual support. After

class hours you'll only be a phone call away from support people who will listen, understand and help you through the hard times. You will be helped, and you will also be helping.

Their Effectiveness

No single program has ever been able to claim a 100-percent success rate. Although some claim a high percentage of quitters by the end of the course, what counts is their long-term success rate. Here the figures begin to get hazy. But each one has been successful for some people, and you may be one of them.

The Choice Is Yours

Only you can choose whether to quit on your own or join a support group. Don't let a false sense of pride stop you from enrolling in a group. There's nothing wrong with asking for help and you should pursue any means available to help you toward a smoke-free, healthier life.