



**Department of Health
and Mental Hygiene**

Mary T. Bassett, MD, MPH
Commissioner

Dear Health Care Professional:

Tobacco use kills an estimated 12,000 New Yorkers a year—and many more suffer daily from tobacco-related illnesses. More than two-thirds of New York City smokers try to quit every year.

With proper counseling and appropriate use of nicotine replacement and other pharmacotherapies including combination regimens, long-term quit rates rise as high as 20 or 30%. However, nationally, only 20% of patients receive counseling and 8% are prescribed a medication.

The prevalence of smoking has declined significantly, but there are still almost 900,000 smokers in New York City. Currently, 80% of adult smokers smoke 10 or fewer cigarettes a day, half being non-daily smokers.

As a health care provider, you are a powerful motivator to help all patients quit smoking regardless of how much, or little, they smoke. We strongly urge you to take these actions:

- Assess smoking status at *every* visit.
- Develop a treatment plan that includes counseling, pharmacotherapy—including combination regimens—and follow-up.
- Document progress on the treatment plan at every visit.
- Establish a workflow to ensure routine assessment of patient progress.

We hope the clinical tools, resources and patient education materials in this *Quit Kit* support and amplify your efforts to help patients quit for good. Your Health Department representative is visiting to discuss how to integrate these recommendations into your practice.

Working together, we can prevent thousands of New Yorkers from suffering and dying. Please join me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Mary T. Bassett'.

Mary T. Bassett, MD, MPH
Commissioner
New York City Department of Health