

Participation in Wellness Coaching boosts postoperative smoking cessation rates up to 15%

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Challenge	While many patients quit smoking prior to elective surgery, relapse is common with healthcare systems lacking standardized approaches to support long-term quit success. We evaluate the effectiveness of Wellness Coaching using Motivational Interviewing combined with medications to achieve improved postoperative cessation rates.
Existing Evidence	Strong evidence shows that smoking cessation improves surgical outcomes, and multiple studies validate the effectiveness of both telephonic coaching and motivational interviewing separately. However, no large-scale studies have examined the combined impact of telephone-based coaching and medications specifically for maintaining smoking cessation after surgery, despite this being recognized as a critical period for relapse.
Target Population	Adult smokers aged 18 and above who underwent elective surgery at Kaiser Permanente Northern California from 2017 to 2022.
Intervention or Exposure	Participation in Wellness Coaching telephonic sessions using Motivational Interviewing techniques combined with Nicotine Replacement Therapy or smoking cessation medications, with patients participating in 1-6 coaching sessions prior to surgery.
Outcomes/Key Findings	Participation in Wellness Coaching resulted in an increased postoperative smoking cessation rate. We demonstrate an 8% increased likelihood of smoking cessation with Wellness Coaching compared to no referral. Even brief participation (1-2 sessions) showed 9% improvement suggesting even minimal engagement can be beneficial. The highest success rates were achieved by combining coaching with cessation medications (RR 1.15, CI 1.11-1.20).
Resulting Action/Change	These results support standardizing presurgical referrals to telephone-based Wellness Coaching or similar programs to significantly lower postoperative smoking relapse rates.
Additional Recommendations	Collaborate with surgical specialties, Primary Care, and Pre-op clinics to standardizing referrals to Wellness Coaching prior to elective surgery.
Implementation Tools	Tracking referrals, engagement with the Wellness Coaching team, and medication use.
Implementation Measurement	Coaching participation rates, cessation success at 1-year post-surgery, and outcomes across demographic and socioeconomic groups.
Reference	Article not published yet