

Behavioral Counseling for ENDS Use

Behavioral Counseling

Behavioral counseling aims to address those three mechanisms maintaining nicotine use:

- the habit of using ENDS
- the emotional coping
- the physical dependence

The first step in changing these behaviors is to identify triggers and there are multiple kinds:

- External triggers (e.g., others smoking or watching TV)
- Internal emotional triggers (e.g., stressed or bored)
- Internal nicotine craving triggers (e.g., craving the taste, withdrawal symptoms)

Strategies in Counseling Include:

- AARM (Avoiding external trigger situations, Altering or changing trigger situations that can't be avoided all together, Replacing smoking with a substitute behavior, and Mentally coping)
- Setting Achievable Goals
- Setting a Quit Date
- Logging their ENDS use
- Reduce their nicotine by 10-15% every week prior to their quit date

AARM STRATEGY

Avoid External Trigger Situations

- Avoid people, places, activities in which you vape
- Examples: other ENDS users, social situations that involve alcohol (at least temporarily)

Alter or Change Trigger Situations

- At times when you cannot avoid triggers, try altering them
- Example: many ENDS users will have their device within reach while driving. Alter this by putting the device in the glove box or in the back seat out of easy reach

Replace ENDS use with another Behavior

- Try doing something else or using substitutes for vaping (for your mouth and hands).
- Alternatives: Try relaxation techniques (e.g., deep breathing), listening to calming music
- Substitutes: Try sugarless gum, fruit, veggies, ice water, toothpicks, straws

Mentally Cope with Emotional Triggers

- Change your thoughts about vaping. Talk yourself out of ENDS use.
- Example: "This urge will only last 5 minutes. Let me wait it out."



Follow Along:
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Behavioral Counseling
for ENDS Use

Learning Objectives:

1. Review psychoeducation on nicotine use and cessation that should be provided to patients.
2. Provide an overview of behavioral change strategies.
3. Discuss an acceptance-based nicotine cessation treatment approach.



Set a Quit Date

Source: <https://www.istockphoto.com/vector/calendar-month-counting-marked-days-in-anticipation-gm1135582884-302154472>



Try doing something else

Source: <https://www.istockphoto.com/photo/woman-artists-hand-with-a-brush-and-red-paint-black-apron-white-background-gm1098009480-294878330>

Example:

High Risk Situation	Coping Actions I Will Take: Avoid trigger, Alter trigger, Replace vaping with a substitute, Mentally cope
Getting stressed out when driving in heavy traffic	<p>Avoid: I won't take ENDS with me in the car</p> <p>Alter: Travel before the heavy traffic starts</p> <p>Replace: Take a stress ball</p> <p>Mental Coping: Tell myself that being healthy to enjoy my family for as long as I can is more important than staying addicted to nicotine for somebody else's profit.</p>



Source: <https://www.istockphoto.com/photo/stress-gm683464814-125437203>

Acceptance-Based Nicotine Cessation Strategies

Mindfulness and acceptance exercises to increase psychological flexibility while increasing the patient's commitment to engage in behaviors aligned with their values. This includes:

- Urge surfing**
 Internal struggle that feeds the cravings. Trying to fight cravings is like trying to block a waterfall. We end up being flooded. With the approach of mindfulness, we step aside and watch the water (cravings, impulses & urges) just go right past. Urges DO NOT have to be acted upon. We can simply observe or watch the craving and allow it to pass without feeding it.
- Identify problems with control.** We can't control our cravings, we must accept that craving will come and pass.
- Face challenges** (e.g., withdrawal symptoms, anxiety) with mindful acceptance.
- Engage** in behaviors aligning with their values.



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