

An Oral Health America Program



For Healthcare Professional

The Dental Team on the Frontline

Dentists, hygienists, dental assistants, and other members of the dental health community represent the frontline of tobacco cessation counseling. Use this direct contact as an opportunity to educate your patients about the dangerous effects of spit tobacco use.

Use the 5 A's When Counseling Patients to Quit Tobacco

As an oral health care provider, you will be faced with patients who don't know how to handle their tobacco addiction and who will need help to quit. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Resources recommends following the "5 A's" when counseling patients to quit tobacco:

ASK about tobacco use. Identify and document tobacco use status for every patient at every visit.

ADVISE to quit. In a clear, strong, and caring manner, urge every tobacco user to quit.

ASSESS willingness to make a quit attempt. Is the tobacco user willing to make a quit attempt at this time?

ASSIST in the quit attempt. For the patient willing to make a quit attempt, use counseling and pharmacotherapy to help him or her quit.

ARRANGE followup. Schedule followup contact, preferably within the first week after the quit date. As a health professional, your encouragement and advice can be the motivating factor that helps your patient quit using tobacco.