

Sara Tello, N.P.

What is it that makes tobacco so addictive and hard to quit?

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My name is Sara Tello. Tobacco companies chemically alter their tobacco with 7,000 chemicals and 70 cancer-causing agents to be as or more addictive than heroin or cocaine, so that you cannot quit.

Why is a comprehensive treatment plan and support so important?

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So if you have, if you go to your primary care and you ask for help, and they give you something available, 5.9% success rate, five out of 100 will be successful. But if you stay beside a specialist, I don't take your cigarettes away. I don't believe in quit dates. I am love and hugs. You can come back tomorrow smoking twice as much. No one's perfect. We're gonna get there. I'll hold your hand. We will figure it out, and we'll get there together, two weeks, two years.

How does behavior affect addiction?

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It is an addiction, a crazy addiction, but it's also their best friend, their stress relief, their boredom release, and a part of their daily routine, telling me, 'I wake up, have coffee, have a cigarette. I walk the dog, I have a cigarette. I eat breakfast, I have a cigarette.' It's the same day after day. So it's complicated.

What makes nicotine products so effective?

1:43

The medications we have address the addiction. once we get the numbers down, then together, the patient and I, we start strategizing. We start with cognitive behavioral therapy, meaning that we just change their routines. And it can be as simple as just slightly tweaking a routine that does not involve the cigarette. And a couple days of that, and they don't miss that cigarette anymore. The nicotine products keep the brain happy so there's no suffering. we, non-addictive if you're grumpy or fussy, you need nicotine. So the nicotine that we use, that's available, that insurance might cover, is essentially non addictive nicotine. We don't add 7000 chemicals and 70 cancer causing agents. We want you to quit smoking. The amount of nicotine in those products is so small, that's how you can use them all together and keep smoking.

How does nicotine affect the brain?

2:17

So what nicotine does? It has rewired the circuitry in the brain. and even just the thought for a smoker quitting sends a threat response.

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2:33

My patients say, 'I don't want this. I hate this. This is killing me. Why am I doing this?' Patients don't have control. It's the nicotine.

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What are some health consequences from smoking, vaping and dipping?

2:47

All of them, every single one of them, macular degeneration, strokes, peripheral artery disease, cancers, everything. The more and more we research it, the more it fully impacts your health in all directions. diabetes. even just reducing your smoking, you feel better. Less is best, in my opinion, when it comes to the lungs. And we can do that, you know, just by using nicotine. my patients tell me, 'I cannot believe just even by cutting down in half, how much better I feel. I breathe better. I see better. I think better.' It's really beautiful, and they're not alone.

Are e-cigarettes a safe alternative?

3:42

No, not a safe alternative at all. The only thing safe to breathe in is air.

How is nicotine used to treat this addiction?

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Well, the brain fights so hard. that's why only one out of 10 can quit cold turkey. So what we're doing is we are, in different ways, giving the brain this nicotine, but I call it nicotine medicine. Okay, so we're, in essence, tricking your brain. We're giving your brain nicotine slow and steady and fast, copying the hit to the brain while it's becoming unaddicted.

How do these products help control cravings?

4:19

Absolutely, the nicotine. you're not going to suffer. We're going to find the magic combination that fits for you. If you are fussy or angry or jittery, you need more nicotine. and it's not apples to apples, okay? By far the tobacco company nicotine is worse. The brain is happy. This is why patients are successful. You continue smoking, vaping or dipping, you learn how to use these tools to satisfy the brain, and then we just start working one by one by one until you no longer smoke, vape or dip.

What if a patient relapses?

5:00

So if a patient takes Chantix and they quit, what I find is that if, I mean, if they relapse, we're not perfect. We can do Chantix again. Seems to work pretty fast the second time. Or my patients have learned the combination of nicotine that works for them. they just regroup, say, 'Okay, let's do what we did with Sara', and they quit. Fast. I hear it over and over. I'll see patients in the

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hallways, and I'll say, 'How are you doing?' And they'll say, 'Oh great, but oh my gosh, I had a relapse, but I quit within a week. Was great. I'm doing great. I feel so good.'

How do we help loved ones who are trying to quit tobacco use?

5:37

Just tell them, there's help. And really, all you should say to them as I love you and I support you, whether you smoke or not, and it's the truth. You just want the best for them. and when we are hard on them, it only makes them smoke more and hide it and be ashamed and feel bad, and it's just a vicious cycle. So you do, you love them, just love them and say 'there's help when you're ready.'