

Tobacco Cessation Counseling



Covered Services

Tobacco cessation counseling for adults and adolescents who use tobacco and it includes expanded counseling for pregnant women.

Who is covered

- Patients who use tobacco, including vaping, regardless of whether they exhibit signs or symptoms of tobacco-related disease
- The patient must be competent and alert at the time of counseling
- Counseling must be provided by a qualified physician or other Medicare-recognized healthcare provider.

Tobacco Cessation Counseling Codes

- **99406**- Smoking and tobacco use cessation counseling visit; intermediate, greater than 3 minutes up to 10 minutes
- **99407**- Smoking and tobacco use cessation counseling visit; intensive, greater than 10 minutes

5 A's of Tobacco Cessation Counseling

- **Ask** all patients about their smoking
- **Advise** them to quit
- **Assess** their readiness to quit
- **Assist** patient to
 - Quit smoking with counseling, medications, nicotine replacement and other resources
 - Develop a quit plan based on their personal interests, past experiences, and current resources.
 - Enhance their motivation if the to quit is not ready, and
- **Arrange** for a follow-up appointment and other referrals to assist with cessation.



Coding Specifics

- Medicare covers 2 cessation attempts per 12-month period.
- Each attempt includes a maximum of up to 4 intermediate (99406) or intensive (99407) counseling visits, with a total Medicare benefit of 8 session per year.
- Minimal counseling is covered at each evaluation and management (E/M) visit.
- A modifier 25 can be added to the primary E/M visit code if a significant, separately identifiable E/M service was provided on the same day as the preventive medicine service.

Who can provide tobacco cessation counseling



- Physicians
- Physician Assistants
- Nurse Practitioners
- Clinical Nurse Specialist
- Clinical Social Workers
- Qualified Psychologist

Smoking and tobacco use cessation counseling services, involves:

- Providing specific suggested methods and interventions
- Helping to motivate the patient to quit using commercial tobacco products to improve their overall health and well-being.
- Offering additional resources, such as support groups for relapse prevention, or state tobacco cessation quitlines for support often including nicotine replacement therapy (NRT; patches, gum, lozenges, etc).



Documentation Requirements:

Providers need to use ICD-10 codes and provide documentation regarding medical necessity and the specifics of what was provided. Coding alone is not sufficient.

Items to document should include the following elements:

- The patient's tobacco use (type and amount)
- Advice to quit and impact of smoking
- Assessment of willingness to attempt to quit
- Methods and skills for cessation
- Medication management of smoking cessation drugs
- Resources provided
- Setting quit date
- Follow-up arranged
- Amount of time spent counseling patient

