

to your

Health!

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Medication to Quit Smoking

Vincent Cheng, Pharm. D; VA Palo Alto Health Care System

Choosing to quit smoking is not easy. When you first stop smoking, you may feel the urge to smoke. This is because your body is getting use to not having nicotine, a chemical in cigarettes that make you want to continue to smoke. However, there are medications out there that can help reduce this craving. The most common medications for quitting smoking are called nicotine replacement therapy. These medications work by giving you small doses of nicotine without any of the other dangerous chemicals found in cigarettes.



See Medication to Quit Smoking – page 4

HealthLiving Assessment: Your Way to the Fountain of Youth?

Serena Gray, RN, Ambulatory Care; VA Palo Alto Health Care System

You might have noticed something new when you opened My HealthVet (www.myhealthva.gov). There is now a link to the HealthLiving Assessment. This is a tool to help you figure out your current health age based on your health and lifestyle. You can also see ways to improve your health age by making changes to your lifestyle. The assessment asks about your current health and you what you want to work on. The HealthLiving Assessment takes about 20 minutes to complete.

When you click the “Submit” button, the program gives you your health age. It then explains ways to lower your health age, with things like being more physically active, eating healthier, or other lifestyle changes. The HealthLiving Assessment is confidential, but you can print it out to share with your PACT team to help set healthy goals and plan your care around things that you want to do.

See HealthLiving Assessment – page 4



Can Comfort Foods be Healthy?

Roshan Luke, RD; Nutrition and Food Service, VA Palo Alto Health Care System

What is your first thought when someone asks about your favorite comfort food? Does your mind give you a picture of hot soup on a cold day or spaghetti made with homemade sauce or is it a warm dessert when you need to be cheered up. For many of us, thoughts of these foods make us feel warm, happy, relaxed or even bring a smile to our faces. These are all good points about comfort foods. However, one of the big problems with these foods are they tend to be high in sugar, calories, fat, salt and sometimes they are high in more than one thing.

Does this mean you can't eat comfort foods if you are on a special diet? Or, can comfort foods be made healthy and still taste good? The simple answer is yes, many of our favorite comfort foods can be made healthy with simple recipe changes. On the right are a few suggestions.

Original Ingredient	Substitution
1 Cup Ricotta	1 Cup Silken Tofu
Sour Cream	Yogurt
Whole Egg	1/4 Cup Liquid Egg Substitute or 2 Egg Whites
1 Cup Whole Milk	1 Cup Soy Milk
Bacon	Turkey Bacon
Butter or Shortening to prevent sticking	Cooking spray or use a non-stick pan
Mayonnaise	Reduced fat or calorie mayonnaise
Cream	Fat free half and half or evaporated skim milk
1 Cup Vegetable oil for baking	1 Cup Applesauce or Fruit puree
1 Teaspoon Vinegar	1 Teaspoon Lemon Juice

Questions or Comments?

If you have any questions or topics you would like addressed in the [To Your Health](#) newsletter, feel free to contact

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[To Your Health](#) is published quarterly for VAPAHCS Veterans and their families.

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Other suggestions:

- Use lean meats to help lower the fat
- Chill soups and stews to remove fat
- Use low sodium broths to lower the salt
- Use high fiber breads or bread crumbs when the recipe ask for white

Some may wonder why comfort foods should be changed and made healthier. Comfort foods can be found in every culture and these foods fill many of us with good memories or simply give us peace when stressed. By making these foods healthier we keep the good points and take charge of our health by watching what we eat. In the end, we are what we eat. Please enjoy the recipe on page 5.



S.M.A.R.T Goals

Setting Yourself up to Reach Your Goals

Veronica Reis, PhD, Health and Behavior Coordinator

Have you ever set a goal and not reached it? Did you think there was something wrong with you? Maybe your goal was not a **SMART** goal. What is a **SMART** goal? A **SMART** goal is:

Specific

What do I want? How will I get what I want?

Examples:

Not specific: "I want to quit smoking."

Specific: "I want to quit smoking in the next 7 days by getting rid of all of my cigarettes, lighters, and ashtrays and using the nicotine patch."

Measurable

How much will I do? How often?

Examples:

Not measurable: "I want to lose weight."

Measurable: "I want to lose 10 pounds in the next 2 months by eating 25% less and walking ½ hour 4 days each week."

Attainable (Within your reach)

Can I do this? Sometimes, when we decide to make a change, we get very excited. You may set a goal that is very hard to achieve. It can be helpful to ask someone else if your goal seems realistic (ask your PACT doctor or nurse).

Examples:

Not attainable: "I am going to walk 5 miles in 30 minutes."

Attainable: "I am going to walk 1 mile in 30 minutes."



Relevant (Important to You)

Why am I doing this? If you are setting a goal because someone else thinks you should, you are not likely to succeed.

Examples:

Not relevant: "My partner thinks I should quit smoking."

Relevant: "I want to quit smoking because I want to be around to watch my kids/grandkids grow up."

Timely

When do you plan to reach your goal?

Often, if we do not set a deadline, then we won't be motivated to change. Set dates to start and end your goal.

Examples:

Not timely: "I am going to walk 4 days each week until I feel better."

Timely: "I am going to walk ½ hour each day 4 days per week for 1 month."

Think about a goal you would like to reach and write it down. Check to see if your goal includes what you need to make it a **SMART** goal.

My **SMART** goals are:

Specific _____

Measurable _____

Attainable _____

Relevant _____

Timely _____



Medication to Quit Smoking – continued from page 1

This helps satisfy your cravings and reduce your urge to smoke. This allows you to decrease the amount of nicotine your body gets to the point where none is needed. Nicotine replacement comes in a variety of different forms. At the VA, we have patches, gum, and lozenges. Everyone is different, so some may see benefit from one form and not another. Don't be discouraged if one doesn't work, there is a chance another form might work better for you.

There are two other medications that do not contain nicotine which are approved by the Food and Drug Administration to help people quit smoking. They are bupropion (Zyban) and varenicline (Chantix).

Both are available in tablet form and require a prescription. These medications carry some additional risks that nicotine replacement doesn't, so these are recommended only after you have tried and failed nicotine replacement. Talk to your primary provider to see if these are good options for you.

Medications alone can't do all the work. They can help with cravings, but they won't completely take away your urge to smoke. Using other quit strategies with medications gives you the best chance to stop for good.

For more information or help with quitting, please contact TeleQuit at 1(650) 493-5000, ext. 60557



HealthLiving Assessment– continued from page 1

Recently, a 53 year old Veteran we'll call Bob Smith was feeling older than his real age. Bob then did the healthy living assessment and found his health age was 53. He said he was very reassured by this. Bob had already started making some healthy lifestyle changes and the healthy

living assessment re-inforced the new choices he was making. Down the road, Bob can do the healthy living assessment again and see if he has lowered his health age. The healthy living assessment is "a great tool", Bob said, and was going to recommend it to his friends.

Your Summary Report:

This assessment was completed on July 29th 2014.
We recommend you update your VA HealthLiving assessment each year.

Your health age is
53
You can reduce this by
approximately 7 years

Care That May Be Due

- Hepatitis Test
- Cholesterol Test
- Update flu vaccine in the Fall

Bob, take action to lower your health age.
Select recommendations below and recalculate:

- For optimal health, lose weight Your BMI is 34
- Eat a variety of fruits and vegetables every day
- Select lean meats and poultry, limit red or processed meat
- Cholesterol test
- Talk with your health care team about Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)
- Talk with your health care team about your trouble sleeping
- Manage Stress



Healthy Recipes

Squash Soup



Ingredients

- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 2 onions (medium, chopped)
- 2 carrots (medium, chopped)
- 2 garlic cloves (minced)
- 1 cup tomato puree (canned)
- 5 cups chicken or vegetable broth, low-sodium
- 4 cups winter squash (cooked)
- 1 1/2 tablespoons oregano (dried)
- 1 1/2 tablespoons basil (dried)

Directions

1. In a large saucepan, warm oil over medium heat.
2. Stir in onions, carrot and garlic.
3. Cook for about 5 minutes, covered.
4. Stir in the tomato puree, chicken broth, cooked squash, and herbs.
5. Bring soup to a simmer and cook, covered, for 30 minutes.

Serving Size: 6 servings

Each serving provides:

Calories	140
Total fat	2.5 g
Saturated fat	0.5 g
Carbohydrates	25 g
Dietary Fiber	5 g
Sodium	140 mg

<http://healthyeating.nhlbi.nih.gov/>



