

Quit smoking, before surgery



Before surgery

If you quit smoking at least six weeks before surgery, it will improve your chances of a successful surgery and healing process.

Why quit?

When you smoke, you have a higher risk of:

- your wound(s) not healing properly, thus increasing the risk of visible scars
- getting infections, which may have serious consequences – life-threatening at worst
- pulmonary complications such as pneumonia.

This can result in extended hospitalization, or even further surgery.

It is important that you quit smoking at least six weeks before surgery, regardless of how much you smoke, or how long you have been smoking.

OTHER REASONS TO QUIT SMOKING

When you quit smoking, you reduce your risk of:

- Cancer – e.g. cancer of the lungs, oesophagus and bladder
- Stroke
- Cardiovascular disease
- Lung diseases – e.g. chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD)
- Reduced fertility.





Is the risk different if I smoke cigarettes, cigars or a pipe?

– No, all types of smoking will affect your health and recovery, negatively.

What about e-cigarettes?

E-cigarettes also contain harmful substances. It is recommended that you quit smoking e-cigarettes before any surgery.

Can I use smoking cessation medicine to help me quit before surgery?

In most cases, you can, but consult your doctor, or the staff at the hospital, where your surgery is taking place.

Will it have any effect if I quit smoking less than six weeks before surgery?

– Yes, smoking cessation is always good for your health. However, if you quit less than six weeks before surgery, you do not have the same guarantee of reducing the risk of complications.

Should I quit smoking before minor surgeries such as dental and plastic surgery?

– Yes, even minor surgeries can cause serious complications. Therefore, it is important to quit smoking before all kinds of surgery.

Get help to quit smoking

Receiving professional smoking cessation counselling increases your chances of success.

Plenty of help is available – both to quit smoking and to stay smoke-free:

- **Stoplinien** – www.stoplinien.dk (in Danish) or tel. +45 80 31 31 31 free counselling
- **E-kvit** – www.ekvit.dk (in Danish) or as an app that can be downloaded from App Store
- **Your municipality**
- **Your general practitioner.**

You can also ask the staff at the hospital that you are at, to help you.

After surgery

Take care of yourself after surgery.

Stay smoke-free.

Danish Health Authority

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