

Scheme to help women quit smoking

Although the number of smokers in Hong Kong has fallen, the number of women smokers, on the other hand, has risen. At present, there is no special programme to help women kick the habit. Statistics also show fewer women quitting smoking than men.

However, the Department of Nursing Studies at the University of Hong Kong is working with community organisations to draw up a community-based scheme called “Women Smoking Cessation Programme” to deal with the problems that make it hard for women to stop smoking – problems such as depression, nicotine addiction, fear of gaining weight, lack of social support, lack of self-confidence, and insufficient strength to fight the habit to the end.

Trained volunteers from community organisations are already counselling women smokers who want to quit smoking. Some of the women are referred to professionals for intensive counselling. Programmes are drawn up for tackling different problems and for dealing with withdrawal traumas. Counsellors stay in touch with their patients by phoning them regularly as a follow up to initial counselling.

The Women Smoking Cessation Programme is provided free of charge. Enquiries and registration can be made through the programme’s telephone hotline: 6752-6266 or 2819-2692. Information on the programme can be obtained from its website:

<http://www3.hku.hk/quitnow>

HKU also has a hotline for young people wanting to quit smoking. It’s called the Youth Quitline and the number to phone to make enquiries and to register is 2819-9557. The website’s address is: <http://www.hku.hk/yquit>