



Do you want to **cut down** but not quit? The TARS study is for people who want to reduce how much they smoke, but not quit.

We would like to invite you to take part in the TARS research study. Before you agree to take part, it is important that you understand what you will be asked to do and why. Please ask us if you are not sure about anything.

### **Why are we doing this study?**

Many people want to cut down their smoking but not stop smoking altogether. Support from the NHS is mostly aimed at helping people to stop smoking, rather than cut down. Little is known about the best way to cut down.

We want to know if simple support from a health trainer can help people who do not want to quit in the next four weeks to reduce how much they smoke. We will compare if this support reduces smoking compared to not receiving it.

You are suitable to take part if you smoke more than 10 cigarettes a day and want to cut down, but not quit.

With your permission your GP will check that there is nothing in your medical history that might affect your safety when taking part in the study, this information may be given to the research team.

We are looking for 900 people to take part.

### **Why might I want to take part?**

Cutting down how much you smoke and doing more physical activity will improve your health. The support you may receive can help you do both.

People who cut down find it easier to quit in the future. The information you provide may help others to plan better support for smokers who want to cut down.

You will receive £40 in shopping vouchers for completing the study.

### **What will happen if I want to take part?**

You will be asked to give your permission (consent) to take part in the study by a member of the study team. Half of all people taking part will get the support from a health trainer to cut down, and half will not. You may not get the health trainer support. The decision is made randomly by a computer.

If you choose to take part in the study it will involve a maximum of 11 months participation.

A selection of all participants will be invited to wear a movement sensor for 7 days; this is like wearing a wrist watch, and it will record your level of physical activity after 3 months of being in the study.

At baseline, 3 and 9 months all participants will be asked to complete some questionnaires. Questionnaires will be posted to you, with a freepost return envelope.

The baseline questionnaire may be face-to-face if you prefer.

If during the study you report that you have not smoked you will be invited to have the carbon monoxide level in your breath measured at a face-to-face meeting with a member of the research team. This involves holding your breath for 10-15 seconds, and then blowing into a carbon monoxide monitor.

### **What will I get with health trainer support?**

If you are offered the support, you will meet with a health trainer once a week for 8 weeks. Meetings will be a combination of face-to-face, at a convenient place for you, and telephone.

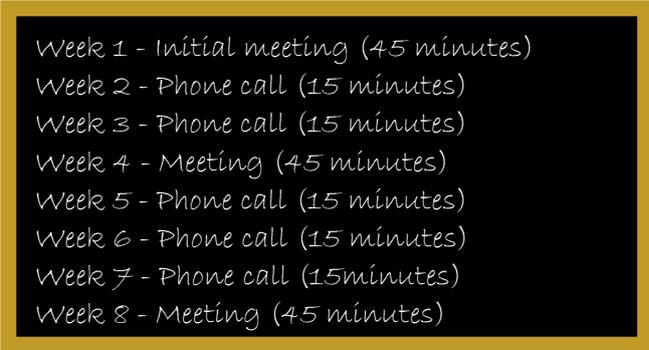
The health trainer will help you to reduce your smoking in a way that suits you. They will also help you to do more physical activity or exercise, if you want to. It could include help in setting goals, access to exercise classes, and a free step counter.

There is no set amount of physical activity in this study; you can choose to do as little or as much as is comfortable for you. If you decide to try any hard physical activity, you will be advised to talk to your doctor. Hard physical activity can have risks. We aim to look mainly at moderate physical activity.

If you choose to try to quit the health trainer will keep supporting you for 6 more weeks, if you wish.

If you want further help from your local NHS Stop Smoking Service or your GP we may be able to help you with that.

### **Example timeline for health trainer support**



*Week 1 - Initial meeting (45 minutes)*  
*Week 2 - Phone call (15 minutes)*  
*Week 3 - Phone call (15 minutes)*  
*Week 4 - Meeting (45 minutes)*  
*Week 5 - Phone call (15 minutes)*  
*Week 6 - Phone call (15 minutes)*  
*Week 7 - Phone call (15 minutes)*  
*Week 8 - Meeting (45 minutes)*

### **What will I get with normal care?**

You will be given some basic advice on cutting down, such as, information about the NHS Stop Smoking Service.

### **Interviews with participants**

We will be asking a sample of all participants to take part in interviews, so we can find out what you think about the study. The interviews will be conducted by a member of the research team, and will be audio recorded. The research team will only have access to the information that you provide during the interview. The interview is optional, and you will be given a separate information sheet and asked to sign a consent form, before you take part.

**Do I have to take part?**

No. Taking part is entirely your choice. If you start the study and then change your mind, it is no problem. You may be asked why you do not want to continue, but you do not have to give any reasons if you do not want to.

**What are the downsides?**

Like most smokers, you may have tried to cut down before. You probably know what it feels like to go for longer without a cigarette. When you cut down you may become stressed, agitated, and moody. These things often cause people to smoke more again.

**Will my information be kept confidential?**

Yes. No information relating to you will be shared with anyone else without your say so. All study information will be kept safely locked in a cabinet, only accessible to the study team.

Reports will contain no information, which can identify you. Your data will be archived for 5 years after the study has finished, and will only be used for future studies if you give us your permission.

**Could the study be stopped for any reason?**

If the team think it is necessary, they will stop the study in the interest of the health and safety of those people taking part.

**What should I do if something goes wrong during the study?**

If you feel ill at any time, you should contact your GP. If you have a medical emergency at any time, you should dial 999 and ask for an ambulance.

Any problems that make it hard for you to continue, or mean that you cannot continue, should be reported to the person listed below.

If you have any concerns or queries, please call the person listed below.

**How can I get more information about the study?**

Please visit the TARS website: <https://www.plymouth.ac.uk/research/primarycare/trial-of-physical-activity-and-reduction-of-smoking-tars>

You'll find contact details for local study teams on the TARS website.

***Thank you for considering taking part in this study and taking  
the time to read this information leaflet***

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