

Mobile phone-based interventions effective in short term for smoking cessation

Clinical question	How effective are mobile phone-based interventions at helping smokers to quit?
Bottom line	The interventions in this review included: a purely text message-based programme with automated proactive text messages and some reactive components (for help with cravings) and interactive (polls/quizzes) components; and an automated email/daily internet page and mobile phone text/audio message programme with proactive and reactive components. Text message mobile phone programmes were effective in the short term (6 weeks) only, and a combined internet and mobile phone programme was effective for up to 12 months (in terms of self-reported quitting).
Caveat	In this review, only one study attempted biochemical verification of quitting at 6 months, and one at 6 weeks. In programmes aimed at young people, where minimal direct contact and anonymity appear to be desired elements, attempting verification may have adverse effects on the collection of follow-up data.
Context	Innovative effective smoking cessation interventions are required to appeal to those who are not accessing traditional cessation services. Mobile phones are widely used and are now well-integrated into the daily lives of many, particularly young adults. Mobile phones are a potential medium for the delivery of health programmes, such as smoking cessation.
Cochrane Systematic Review	Whittaker R et al. Mobile phone-based interventions for smoking cessation. Cochrane Reviews 2009, Issue 4. Article No. CD006611. DOI: 10.1002/14651858.CD006611.pub2. This review contains 4 studies involving 2601 participants.
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