

# The Risks of Smoking and the Benefits of Quitting

Joe Juarez | [Blue Shield of CA](#)  
Account Executive,  
Wellvolution: Lifestyle Intervention Program



# Heart Attack and Stroke



## Risks

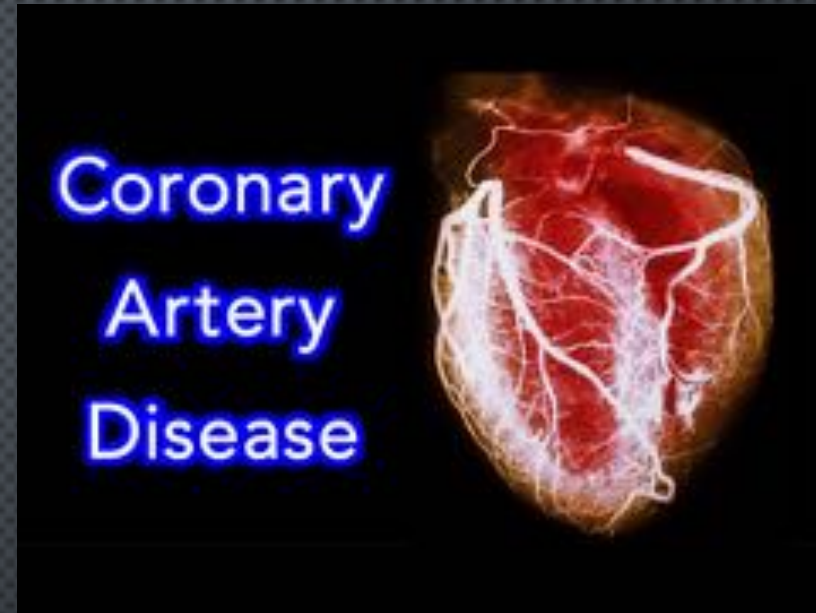
- A smokers chance of dying from a heart attack is 2-3 times greater than that of a non-smoker
- About 1 in 4 heart attacks is believed to be directly related to smoking.
- When a smoker who has a heart attack, their risk of sudden death is twice that of a non-smoker
- Smoking is a much higher risk factor for a heart attack or stroke than high cholesterol, obesity, high blood pressure, or stress.

## Benefits of Quitting

- People who quit smoking before age 50 reduce their risk of dying by half in the next 15 years compared with continuing smokers.
- Quitting before age 35, can almost reverse all risks of smoking.
- If you already have coronary artery disease, your risk of a second heart attack and possible sudden death decreases when you quit smoking.



# Coronary Artery Disease (CAD)



## Risks

- Smoking causes blood platelets to clump with a high risk to form clots
- Can cause spasms in coronary arteries which can reduce blood flow to the heart
- Smoking cause irregular heartbeats
- Lowers HDL's or "good cholesterol"
- Reduces oxygen in red blood cells

## Benefits of Quitting

- After your first year of not smoking, your risk of heart disease decreases by half. Also, your risk of having a heart attack decreases when you stop smoking.
- After 15 years of not smoking, your risk of death from heart disease is the same as if you had never smoked at all.



# Problems with Pregnancy



## Risks

Women who smoke are more likely to have the following problems:

- Stillbirths and Miscarriages
- Low birth weight
- Children who have learning, emotional, and behavioral problems

## Benefits of Quitting

- If you quit smoking before you become pregnant (or sometime during the first 3 months of your pregnancy), your risk of having a baby with low birth weight is the same as that of a woman who does not smoke. Women who quit later in their pregnancy still reduce the risk of problems for their babies.



# Effects on Nutrition



## Risks

- Smoking drains the body of essential vitamins and minerals and also blocks absorption of these vital nutrients including antioxidants.
- Smoking accelerates to production of free radicals. Free radicals may cause tissue and organ damage. Low antioxidant levels reduces the bodies ability to fight off these free radicals.
- Vitamin D, which aids in calcium absorption, is affected by smoking. Smokers are at higher risk for osteoporosis.

## Benefits of Quitting

- The body will be able to absorb essential vitamins and minerals creating a strong immune system.
- A stronger immune system improves the bodies ability to repair and strengthen itself.
- High antioxidant levels creates stronger bones, reduces the likeliness of getting sick, and allows the body to health properly.



# Health Risks for Family Members



## Risks

### Secondhand Smoke

- Spouses and children have an increased risk of cancer and heart disease
- Babies whose parents smoke
  - Are more likely to have ear infections, pneumonia, and bronchitis in the first years of their lives
  - Have a higher risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS)

## Benefits of Quitting

- When you quit smoking, you reduce all of these risks for health problems in your family. You also increase the chance that your children will not smoke or will quit if they already smoke.

# Blue Shield of California's Smoking Cessation Program

QuitNet



# QUITNET

- Based on the latest science and best practices to help individuals overcome addiction to tobacco.
- Integrates many intervention modalities, including online and mobile support from experts and peers, personalized email and SMS text support.
- With QuitNet members are eligible to contact the CA state smoking hotline to receive telephone-based coaching from a tobacco treatment specialist, and pharmaceutical quit aids.





# Social Support

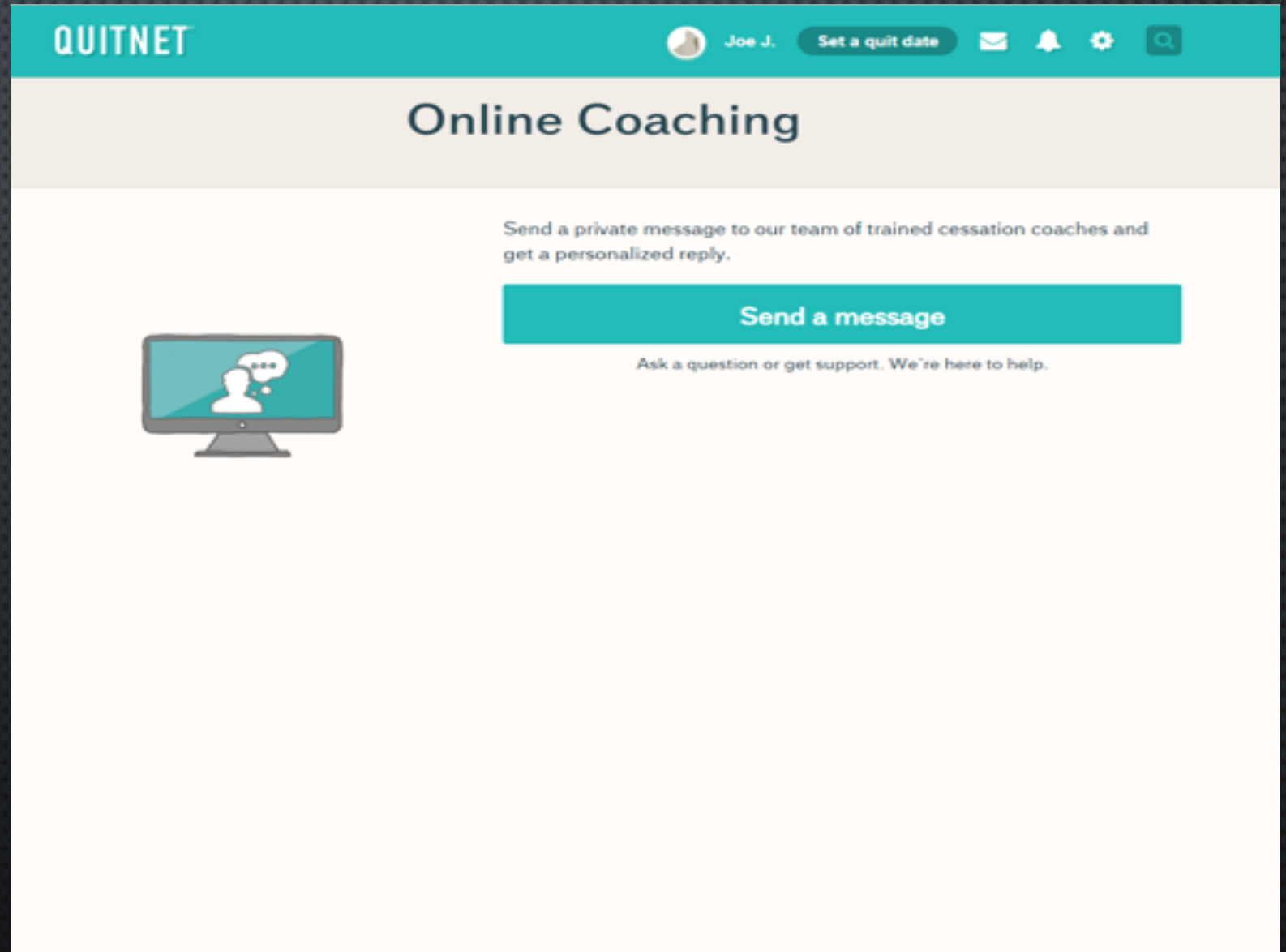
- Other smokers that want to quit
- Former smokers
- Coaches
- Counselors

The screenshot shows the QUITNET mobile application interface. At the top, there is a teal header with the "QUITNET" logo on the left, a user profile icon for "Joe J." in the center, and a "Set a quit date" button on the right. Below the header, a navigation bar contains icons for "Everyone", "Friends", "Craving", "Questions", and "Anniversaries". The main content area features a post from "Mark C." who has been "1 Month Quit". The post includes a profile picture, a blue confetti background, and the text: "I month quit: 'Who are you quitting for?' Well they ask who am I staying quick for let me start with myself but most of all I am quitting for my grandson I want to be able to take him fishing watch him play baseball take him hunting and do all the things that my father did for me I do want to be that grandpa that can't do these things with his grandson I don't want to be that person that is on oxygen because of smoking. I am also quitting ...". Below the text are "2 comments • 8 smiles" and a row of eight profile icons. At the bottom of the post are "Comment" and "Smile" buttons. A second post from "Tamara M." is partially visible below, with the text "Hey everyone. Hope all is doing well. Back to square one." and "5 comments".



## Personal Support

- Personalized emails
- Personalized text
- CA state smoking hotline

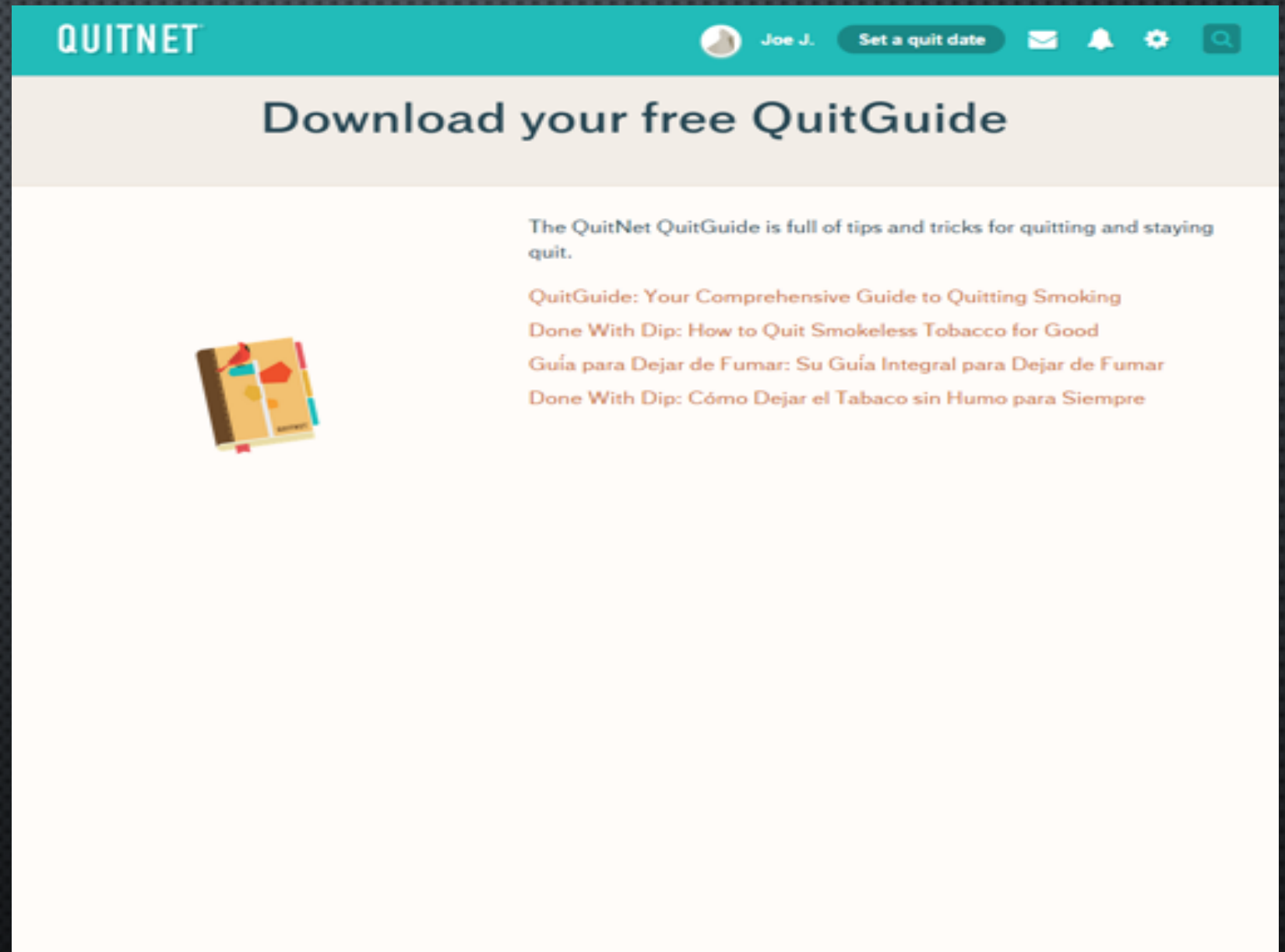


The screenshot shows the QUITNET website's "Online Coaching" section. At the top, there is a teal navigation bar with the "QUITNET" logo on the left, a user profile icon labeled "Joe J.", a "Set a quit date" button, and icons for email, notifications, settings, and search. Below the navigation bar is a light beige header with the text "Online Coaching". The main content area is white and features a central illustration of a computer monitor displaying a person icon and speech bubbles. To the right of the monitor, there is a teal button labeled "Send a message" with the text "Send a private message to our team of trained cessation coaches and get a personalized reply." below it. Underneath the button, a smaller line of text reads "Ask a question or get support. We're here to help."



## Digital Resources

- QuitGuide
- Done With Dip



The screenshot shows the QUITNET website interface. At the top, there is a teal header with the QUITNET logo on the left and user information on the right, including a profile icon for 'Joe J.', a 'Set a quit date' button, and icons for email, notifications, settings, and search. Below the header is a light beige banner with the text 'Download your free QuitGuide'. The main content area is white and features a central illustration of a book with a colorful cover. To the right of the book, there is a paragraph of text and a list of three titles in orange text: 'QuitGuide: Your Comprehensive Guide to Quitting Smoking', 'Done With Dip: How to Quit Smokeless Tobacco for Good', and 'Guía para Dejar de Fumar: Su Guía Integral para Dejar de Fumar'. Below these titles is another line of text: 'Done With Dip: Cómo Dejar el Tabaco sin Humo para Siempre'.

QUITNET

Joe J. Set a quit date

### Download your free QuitGuide

The QuitNet QuitGuide is full of tips and tricks for quitting and staying quit.

QuitGuide: Your Comprehensive Guide to Quitting Smoking  
Done With Dip: How to Quit Smokeless Tobacco for Good  
Guía para Dejar de Fumar: Su Guía Integral para Dejar de Fumar  
Done With Dip: Cómo Dejar el Tabaco sin Humo para Siempre





You've got a premium membership!  
As a sponsored member, you're eligible for free QuitNet services. Check your welcome email for all the details.

## You can get free nicotine replacement therapy!

Because you said you smoke 14 cigarettes a day, you should start with the 21-milligram patch.

21 milligram



For people who smoke **10 or more** cigarettes a day.

✔ Selected

14 milligram



For people who smoke **fewer than 10** cigarettes a day.

Choose 14 mg

Get the 21 mg patch

I don't want free patches right now

## Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRT)

- 21 or 14 milligram patch
- 6 week supply
- BSC members



## How is your well-being?

Wellvolution™ is an easy, social and fun approach to wellness. Participate on the go, from your computer, smartphone, or tablet, and invite your family and friends to join the fun and support your health goals.

READY, SET, GO!

Already a member? Sign in

### Start your journey to improved well-being.

After you join Wellvolution, you'll have special access to:



#### Well-Being Tracker

Take the Well-Being 5 assessment, a validated measure of well-being developed by Gallup and Healthways. Next, get personalized feedback about ways to boost your well-being. Then come back to Well-Being Tracker to track your well-being over time!

> Get started. [Join Wellvolution](#)



#### Well-Being delivered daily

Join the Daily Challenge® community and see how friends can improve your well-being and make health change fun. Connect with other members, earn points, and reach new levels in the program - all while doing small actions that add up to big change.

> Get started. [Join Wellvolution](#)  
> Learn more. [View video](#)

# Questions?