

Phone counseling doubles chances of smokers kicking the habit

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Washington: A new research shows that getting a little encouragement by phone counselors doubles the chances of smokers successfully kick the habit.

The conclusion comes from an updated Cochrane Systematic Review that considered the evidence of 48 trials that met stringent inclusion criteria.

"In updating the review we have distinguished between the different ways that telephone services were delivered and the differences in the participants," says lead Review Author Lindsay Stead, who works in the Department of Primary Health Care at Oxford University.

The study claims that people who receive repeated calls from the counselor have increased chance of giving up smoking by 50% compared to smokers who only receive self-help materials and/or receive brief counseling.

The researchers found that participants who got at least three phone calls from a quit-smoking counselor were more likely to quit smoking.

"Telephone quit lines provide an important route of access to support for smokers, and call-back counseling enhances their usefulness," Stead added.