

# Self-reported quit aids and assistance used by smokers at their most recent quit attempt: Findings from the 2020 International Tobacco Control Four Country Smoking and Vaping Survey

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## Abstract

**Introduction:** This study retrospectively describes smoking cessation aids, cessation services, and other types of assistance used by current and ex-smokers at last quit attempt (LQA) in four high-income countries.

**Methods:** Data are from the Wave 3 (2020) International Tobacco Control Four Country Smoking and Vaping Survey in Australia, Canada, England, and the US. Eligible respondents were daily smokers or past-daily recent ex-smokers who made a quit attempt/quit smoking in the last 24-months, resulting in 3614 respondents. Self-reported quit aids/assistance included: nicotine vaping products (NVPs), nicotine replacement therapy (NRT), other pharmacological therapies (OPT: varenicline/bupropion/cytisine), tobacco (non-combustible: heated tobacco product/smokeless tobacco), cessation services (quitline/counseling/doctor), other cessation support (e.g., mobile apps/website/pamphlets etc.), or no aid.

**Results:** Among all respondents, at LQA, 28.8% used NRT, 28.0% used an NVP, 12.0% used OPT, 7.8% used a cessation service, 1.7% used a tobacco product, 16.5% other cessation support, and 38.6% used no aid/assistance. Slightly more than half of all smokers and ex-smokers (57.2%) reported using any type of pharmacotherapy (NRT or OPT) and/or an NVP, half used NRT and/or an NVP (49.9%), and 38.4% used any type of pharmacotherapy (NRT and/or OPT). A quarter of smokers/ex-smokers used a combination of aids. NVPs and NRT were the most prevalent types of cessation aids used in all four countries; however, NRT was more commonly used in Australia relative to NVPs, and in England, NVPs were more commonly used than NRT. The use of NVPs or NRT was more evenly distributed in Canada and the US.

**Conclusions:** It appears that many smokers are still trying to quit unassisted, rather than utilizing cessation aids or other forms of assistance. Of those who did use assistance, NRT and NVPs were the most common method, which appears to suggest that nicotine substitution is important for smokers when trying to quit smoking.

## Recommended Citation

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