

Stoptober launches to give smokers the confidence to quit

- Launch of Stoptober encourages thousands of smokers to quit the habit this October
- Smoking remains the single biggest cause of preventable illness and death in England
- People are five times more likely to quit for good if they can make it to at least 28 days smoke free
- A new film has been released featuring recent ex-smoker and Strictly Come Dancing star James Jordan exploring how quitters can gain the confidence to quit for good this Stoptober

Smokers in England are being urged to stub out the habit as part of the annual Stoptober public health campaign launching next month, as latest statistics show smoking costs the NHS £2.4bn a year while causing at least 15 types of cancers, including lung cancer and acute myeloid leukaemia.

Stoptober – now in its 11th year – aims to empower people to give up smoking during October, as [evidence](#) shows people are five times more likely to quit for good if they can make it to at least 28 days smoke free.

[Research](#) shows that self-confidence is a major factor in successful attempts at quitting smoking. This year's campaign will encourage people to take simple steps to help build their confidence and get the support they need from family and friends, as well as professional help, to stop smoking for good.

Despite smoking rates declining, there are nearly six million adults in England who still smoke, and smoking remains the single biggest cause of preventable illness and death in England. According to estimates by Action on Smoking and Health, the annual costs of smoking to productivity are £13.2 billion; treating illnesses associated with smoking also costs the NHS £2.4bn a year, with the wider cost to society in England being approximately £17bn a year.

To help launch the campaign and encourage smokers to drop the habit, a film has been released today (Saturday 24 September) featuring former Strictly Come Dancing professional dancer James Jordan, who opens up about his recent journey to quit the habit, having smoked for 27 years. He speaks to ex-smoker and NHS psychiatrist, Dr Max Pemberton, and stop smoking professional, Louise Ross, about the importance of self-confidence when quitting smoking, as well as getting the right support.

Former Strictly Come Dancing professional dancer James Jordan said:

I consider myself a confident person in most areas of my life, but have always faltered with smoking, so thought I wouldn't be able to quit. I smoked for 27 years. My quitting journey has shown me that

I am more capable than I thought, thanks to the support of my own family and friends and the professional help I sought.

Quitting smoking can improve your health, quality of life and save you money. I am so glad I took this step and had the chance to speak to the brilliant experts to give myself and others the confidence that quitting smoking, even if you've been smoking for decades, is possible.

Most smokers say they want to quit, and latest [statistics](#) show more than a third of smokers (36.6%) tried to quit in the last 12 months.

Emeritus Professor Behaviour Scientist at UCL Prof. Robert West said:

What is really interesting is just how much of an impact self-efficacy, that sense of self-belief and confidence, has on quitting success. That confidence is something we can really help to influence. It really does show the power of the mind – self-belief when combined with other quitting aids such as vapes or NRT effectively equip people in giving up.

What people considering quitting this Stoptober should also bear in mind is that even if you've tried to quit before and not managed it, that doesn't mean it won't work this time. You will have learnt something from your previous attempts: think of each quit attempt as a stepping stone to becoming smoke free for life."

Stopping smoking brings multiple benefits to health, some immediate and others that build over time. These include being able to breathe and move around more easily, a reduced risk of several cancers and financial benefits. [Analysis](#) from HM Revenue and Customs shows the average smoker is able to save around £2,000 a year when they quit.

Stoptober offers a range of free quitting tools including the NHS Quit Smoking app, Facebook online communities, daily emails and SMS, an online Personal Quit Plan, as well as advice on stop smoking aids, vaping to quit smoking and free expert support from local Stop Smoking Services.

Public Health and Mental Health Minister Dr Caroline Johnson said:

Smoking is extremely addictive and can have devastating health impacts in the long term. As a paediatrician, I have seen first-hand that smoking addiction usually begins in childhood, and once started it is very difficult to quit.

We are determined to support people to stub out the habit, so it is fantastic to see the return of Stoptober, equipping smokers with the tools and confidence they need to go smoke free.

Deputy Chief Medical Officer for England Dr Jeanelle de Gruchy said:

Smoking is a major cause of ill health, cancer and disability in England.

Quitting smoking is one of the best things you can do for your health, please give it a go this Stoptober.

NHS psychiatrist Dr Max Pemberton said:

As a doctor and an ex-smoker myself, I always urge my patients to quit smoking wherever possible as we know all too well how every cigarette smoked damages the lungs. I also know first-hand how much healthier and full of life I am after quitting now that my lungs have had a chance to clear.

What is of particular interest to me as a psychiatrist is how much of an impact individual confidence has on attempting to quit. I want to help everyone feel confident in their own ability to quit, feeling that they can access the vast amount of support out there, so they are set to give quitting smoking a shot this Stoptober.

For free support to quit this October, search 'Stoptober'.

Notes to editors:

- Stoptober is the annual campaign under OHID's umbrella brand, 'Better Health Let's Do This' that encourages smokers across the country to join in and give quitting a go for the month of October.
- The film featuring former Strictly Come Dancing professional dancer James Jordan, NHS psychiatrist Dr Max Pemberton and stop smoking professional Louise Ross is available [here](#).
- Visit <https://www.nhs.uk/better-health/quit-smoking> to find out more on what support is available.

Joint statement from senior officials meeting on Libya

Press release

Senior officials representing France, Germany, Italy, the United Kingdom, and the United States met on the margins of UNGA to review the ongoing crisis in

Libya



Senior officials representing France, Germany, Italy, the United Kingdom, and the United States met on September 22 on the margins of the United Nations (UN) General Assembly in New York to review the ongoing crisis in Libya. They expressed their support for Special Representative of the Secretary-General Abdoulaye Bathily as he takes up his mandate to advance political stability and reconciliation among Libyans. The officials affirmed their full support for UN mediation aimed at producing a constitutional basis to enable free, fair, and inclusive presidential and parliamentary elections throughout Libya in the shortest possible time. The officials also discussed the importance of fulfilling Libyan aspirations for the transparent management of oil revenues and agreeing on a unified executive with a mandate focused on preparing for elections. Participants strongly rejected any use of violence and reiterated their support for full implementation of the October 23, 2020 ceasefire agreement.

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[Second vaccine doses to be offered to those at highest risk from monkeypox](#)

The UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) has announced that second doses of the smallpox (Jynneos) vaccine will be offered to people [at highest risk from monkeypox](#), in order to maximise protection against the virus.

This targeted approach is also supported by modelling published in today's [technical briefing 8](#) which suggests vaccinating 25% of the groups most at risk could significantly reduce the risk of transmission.

Whilst sexual health clinics will continue to prioritise offering first doses to those at highest risk, some clinics will also begin to offer eligible people a second dose to provide longer term protection.

The [Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation \(JCVI\)](#) has endorsed UKHSA's proposal to offer second doses to those at highest risk, while

continuing efforts to maximise uptake of the first dose within this group.

There are no current plans to widen the offer of vaccination beyond the existing priority cohorts, though this decision will be kept under review.

The NHS will call forward those that are eligible for vaccination. Second doses will be offered from around 2 to 3 months after the first dose to maximise protection.

As of 20 September, more than 45,000 people have received a dose of the vaccine including over 40,000 gay, bisexual and other men who have sex with men who are at highest risk of exposure.

In order to maximise the number of people that can be vaccinated, more clinics will offer the vaccine using intradermal administration in the coming weeks. This safe and clinically approved approach has been positively received by patients and staff where it has been used already.

UKHSA has confirmed delivery of 20,000 additional vaccines from Bavarian Nordic, the single global supplier of the vaccine being used in response to the current outbreak of monkeypox in the UK. The vaccines are available for NHS services to order and are being distributed now, with a further 80,000 vaccines expected to arrive later this month. The use of intradermal administration will mean that everyone at highest risk will have access to two doses of monkeypox vaccine in the coming months.

As of 16 September, there are 3,585 confirmed and highly probable cases of monkeypox in the UK. Following a clear peak of more than 60 cases per day in mid-July, the number of cases has decreased throughout August and continues to fall, with less than 15 cases per day on average in early September.

Analysis of wider infection trends suggests changes in behaviour in the groups most at risk may have contributed to the reduced case rates.

Dr Gayatri Amirthalingam, Deputy Director, Public Health Programmes at UKHSA said:

It's encouraging that we're continuing to see fewer cases of monkeypox reported in the UK and we are grateful to everyone who has followed advice about potential symptoms, isolated as part of this outbreak or come forward for a vaccination to help limit transmission.

Prioritising vaccine stock where possible for second doses for those at highest risk will help us maximise protection and interrupt transmission. When you are called forward for vaccination, please take up the offer.

Professor Sir Andrew Pollard, chair of the JCVI, said:

The JCVI has endorsed the UKHSA's proposal that vaccination to protect against monkeypox should continue to be prioritised for those at highest risk of exposure to the virus, including offering second doses to individuals once they become eligible.

This approach will ensure the globally-limited supplies are used most effectively, continuing to break chains of transmission, as well as providing those at highest risk of exposure with longer-lasting protection.

The use of the intradermal vaccination method at some clinics also means more doses can be drawn from the vials, helping to maximise the reach of the UK's supplies and ensure second doses for all those eligible. The JCVI will keep the offer of monkeypox vaccination under review to ensure it continues to have the maximum impact on the current outbreak.

Improving Israeli-Palestinian economic cooperation as a path to peace: Lord Ahmad statement at UNGA

I am sincerely grateful to Norway for bringing us together and to the Government of Israel and Palestinian Authority for their participation.

Let me begin by expressing our deep concern over the grave economic situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territories.

If we are to achieve peace and stability in the region, it is of course vital that the Palestinian Authority and UNWRA are on a stable financial footing.

The United Kingdom is committed to supporting this.

We will continue to work directly with both parties to help boost economic development, trade and investment.

This includes offering technical assistance to the Palestinian Authority and supporting Palestinian companies to boost exports, among other things.

We were pleased to hear about the success of the E-VAT pilot and welcome Israel's commitment to rolling out the system to all Israeli businesses.

As we know, this has the potential to raise more than \$100 million per year for the Palestinian Authority.

It is a clear signal of the value of cooperation between the parties and the

donor community.

We also welcome the Government of Israel's efforts to enable electronic payments to Palestinians working in Israel.

And we are glad to see the positive steps taken by the Palestinian Authority, as outlined by Finance Minister Bishara, to reduce the public sector wage bill.

Madame Chair,

While we welcome commitments made by the parties and the spirit of cooperation they bring today, progress has not been as fast as we would have liked.

We need much quicker progress on fiscal reforms, and efforts to reduce barriers to trade and investment in the West Bank, if we stand any hope of reviving economic growth in the Occupied Palestinian Territories.

We call on the Government of Israel to undertake reforms to the clearance revenue mechanism and to renew efforts to tackle the restrictions and costs facing Palestinian businesses.

We would also like Israel to take a decision on the handling fee on Palestinian Authority fuel purchases – which is disproportionate, in our view.

We urge the Palestinian Authority to bolster work with partners, including the International Monetary Fund, on the reforms necessary to address the fiscal crisis and build a more stable future.

We must also retain focus on the humanitarian situation in Gaza and the need for economic recovery and reconstruction.

Only last month, we saw yet another escalation of violence on the strip.

We welcome the increase in permits for Gazans to work in Israel but unemployment remains unacceptably high.

We urge Israel to continue increasing work permits and reducing restrictions in order to create more jobs.

Madame Chair,

There is no hope of making progress on these issues without ministerial level engagement and dialogue, and we would like to see this stepped up.

We welcome the parties' commitments to re-establishing the Joint Economic Committee as the key body for decision-making, and call for this meeting to take place urgently.

The UK will do all we can to support the parties to work together to address challenges and strengthen Palestinian Authority institutions for the future.

Madame Chair,

While we have rightly focussed on the economic situation today, I must also address the bigger picture. We are gravely concerned about the deteriorating security situation in the West Bank and the risk of instability.

The UK calls on both parties to refrain from taking actions that undermine the prospect for peace.

This includes all unilateral and provocative acts, and breaches of international law.

These take us further from a negotiated two-state solution, and the long-term peace and stability that Israelis and Palestinians so deserve.

The UK will do all we can to support progress towards that goal.