

Carbon Monoxide (CO) Monitor – Guidance on use

See below guidance for community pharmacy staff on the step by step use of carbon monoxide (CO) monitors. It is good practice to use CO monitors at the weekly stages of the Community Pharmacy Stop Smoking Service; they provide a good incentive to clients to remain smoke-free as well as providing a CO validated 4 week quit attempt.

Step by step:

- Explain purpose of CO monitoring to client (as a good incentive to remain smoke-free) and obtain verbal consent for test
- Wash hands / clean hands with alcohol gel
- Turn monitor on
- Attach plastic T-piece / D-piece
- Clean plastic T-piece / D-piece with non-alcoholic wipes
- Attach cardboard mouthpiece to plastic T-piece / D-piece taking care not to touch the end which the patient will put in their mouth
- Explain procedure to client, ensuring they are aware they will need to hold their breath for 10-15 seconds depending on the type of monitor being used (although the times on these can be adjusted); explain that you will start the timer as they breathe in and they will be asked to blow through the mouthpiece at the end of the countdown
- When the client and the monitor are ready, ask the client to take a normal breath in and hold and start the timer on the CO monitor
- Once the countdown is at zero (some beep to indicate this), hand the monitor to the client and ask them to exhale a long strong blow, as able, into the mouthpiece and keep blowing until their lungs are empty
- The CO reading is shown within seconds and will slowly climb to a peak level - some monitors start to beep as they count once they reach the 'amber' readings and continue until the peak reading has been reached; the higher the CO level, the faster the monitor will beep
- Once post-quit, all clients should blow a green reading - ideally it should be within range 1-4 ppm if possible.
- Once the reading has been established, remove the mouthpiece (using a tissue or a wipe to avoid direct contact with your hands) and dispose of carefully, or ask the client to remove it themselves and dispose of carefully
- Clean entire monitor with non-alcoholic wipes after each use
- Change the plastic T-piece / D-piece after every 20 uses, or as required for infection control reasons

Contact your local CHP Stop Smoking Service for replacement T-pieces / D-pieces, disposable mouthpieces and non-alcoholic cleansing wipes. All CHP Stop Smoking Services can be contacted via the Freephone number 0800 025 3000.

Your local CHP Stop Smoking Service will require your monitor to be returned possibly every six months for calibration, but a minimum of annually for calibration / servicing