HERSCHEL MEDICAL CENTRE

PATIENT HEALTH NEWSLETTER

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CLEAR SKIES START WITH CLEAR LUNGS

Your Stoptober guide — 28 smoke-free days, five times the chance of quitting for good

🌬 SMOKE ON THE HORIZON, TWO CENTURIES AGO

William Herschel's biggest obstacle was rarely cloud — it was smoke. Coal fires and chimney haze drifting across Slough blurred his view, turning sharp stars into smudges. He learned to wait for the stillest, clearest nights, when the air itself finally cooperated. It's the same principle behind Stoptober. Clear the smoke from your own lungs, and things come back into focus too — breathing, energy, even taste and smell. You don't need perfect conditions from night one. Just steady progress toward clearer air.

WHY QUITTING NOW MATTERS

- **Stoptober runs all October**, built around one simple fact: stay smoke-free for 28 days and you're **five times more likely to quit for good**.
- The benefits start almost immediately — **your heart rate begins to normalise within 20 minutes** of your last cigarette, and carbon monoxide levels return to normal within 12 hours.
- Within a few weeks, breathing improves, energy rises, and your risk of heart disease starts to drop — **your body starts repairing itself as soon as you stop.**
- Willpower alone is still the most common way people try to quit, despite being the **least effective approach** — combining support with nicotine replacement therapy, a vape, or medication greatly improves your odds.
- Quitting isn't just physical — evidence shows that once the short-term withdrawal stage passes, people report **reduced anxiety, depression and stress**, with many feeling noticeably happier within six weeks.
- It's also one of the biggest boosts you can give your household budget — the money adds up fast once the cigarettes stop.

YOUR MISSION, HERSCHEL-STYLE

You don't need perfect conditions to start — just a clear date and a plan:

- **Set your quit date and register for free support** with us at reception or via the NHS App — the earlier in October you start, the sooner you'll pass the 28-day mark.
- **Talk to us about the right method for you** — nicotine replacement therapy, a vape, or medication — the combination that fits your habits makes the biggest difference to success.
- **Tell someone your quit date** — support from family or friends, much like Herschel's own sister Caroline working alongside him, makes the whole thing easier to stick to.
- **Track your first 28 days** — logging milestones and cravings helps you notice progress on the days that feel hardest.
- **If you slip up, don't give up** — most people who quit successfully needed more than one attempt to get there.

Clearer skies. Clearer lungs. One steady day at a time.

Start your Stoptober journey today — speak to our team at reception or via the NHS App — Herschel Surgery, Slough

Sources: NHS England / Better Health "Stoptober"; Office for Health Improvement and Disparities — for general information only, not a substitute for personalised medical advice.