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## Challenge your brain

Your brain thrives on new challenges. When presented with a puzzle, your brain works to problem-solve and make connections. This process helps keep your brain strong and healthy.

Cognitively stimulating leisure activities, known as CSLAs, are one way to access these brain-boosting benefits. Crosswords, logic puzzles, brain teasers, and number puzzles are all examples of CSLAs. They may:

- Sharpen focus
- Improve memory
- Strengthen neural connections
- Increase mental processing speed
- Delay or reduce age-related cognitive decline

Try this brain teaser to exercise your mind today!

What is seen in the middle of March and April that can't be seen at the beginning or end of either month?

(Answer: the letter "r")

# Secret weapon to quit smoking

If you're trying to quit smoking, getting through the day without a smoke may seem daunting. But, thankfully, there are medications that reduce cravings and manage withdrawal symptoms. They're your secret weapon to quitting success.



## NICOTINE REPLACEMENT THERAPY (NRT)

It's no secret that nicotine is addictive. Your body will crave more when you try to quit smoking. Giving your body a small dose of nicotine can help manage cravings as you cut back on cigarettes.

### Over-the-counter:

- Nicotine patches
- Nicotine gum
- Nicotine lozenges

### Prescription:

- Nicotine inhaler
- Nicotine nasal spray



## PRESCRIPTION MEDICATIONS

Prescription medications are available that help decrease the urge to smoke and make quitting easier. Watch for side effects and talk to your doctor right away if you experience changes in mood or actions.

**Varenicline:** This medication works by interfering with the effects of nicotine on the brain, making nicotine less enjoyable. It can also reduce the urge to smoke. Your doctor will usually have you take Varenicline about a week before you quit.

**Bupropion SR:** This medication is a common antidepressant that also helps people stop smoking. It works by increasing certain types of brain activity and may boost dopamine levels. It takes several weeks for full effect, so it is often started before quitting.

## THE RIGHT COMBINATION

Often a combination of tools is needed to help you quit. Talk to your doctor to find out which options are right for you. And don't be afraid to follow up and make adjustments until you find the right combination.

- Two different forms of NRT are usually more effective than one. It often works to combine a long-acting NRT (such as the patch) with a short-acting NRT (such as a lozenge or gum).
- Combining medication or NRT with smoking cessation coaching increases your chance of success.
- Call 1-800-QUIT-NOW to connect with a free coach and get help to quit.



# Mohs surgery to beat cancer

Mohs surgery is among the most effective treatments for certain types of skin cancers. It is named in honor of Dr. Fredrick Mohs, who developed the technique in the 1930s. By aiding in the complete removal of cancer cells, Mohs surgery offers a high chance of a cure.



## HOW IT WORKS

Mohs is a precision surgery that removes skin cancer while sparing healthy tissue.

- The tumor is clearly outlined on the skin, and an anesthetic is injected.
- All visible tumor is removed, called “debulking.”
- Then a thin layer of tissue is removed from around and underneath where the visible tumor was located.
- Tissue is examined under a microscope to see if all tumor cells have been removed.
- The process may be repeated until all traces of the tumor are gone.
- The surgical area may be closed, grafted, or allowed to heal on its own, depending on the size and location.

## WHEN IT'S USED

Not all types of cancer can be treated with Mohs surgery. The following criteria are used to determine when it's the best approach:

- Skin cancer with a high risk of recurrence
- Tumor location where preserving healthy tissue is important
- Skin cancer located on the face, hands, feet, genitals, and nipples
- In immunocompromised patients who would benefit from a less invasive procedure
- If the tumor was previously removed, but the surgical margins were not clear

## BENEFITS

Mohs surgery provides many benefits over other forms of surgery to remove skin cancer. Your doctor or dermatologist will determine if it's right for you.

- Spares healthy tissue from removal
- Provides precise control over tumor removal to ensure clear margins
- Can be done in a doctor's office and usually completed in one day
- Patient stays awake for the procedure
- Leaves the smallest possible scar
- High cure rate



# Estate planning: Setting up a trust

A trust is a legal arrangement in which one person holds property or assets for the benefit of another party. Trusts have many benefits depending on your situation.



## HOW IT WORKS

A trust is set up by a grantor, managed by a trustee, and provides benefits to a beneficiary. These three people can be separate individuals or, in some cases, the same person. A trust is made up of assets which can be cash, property, or other assets.

## BENEFITS OF A TRUST

- Can minimize taxes on assets
- Helpful to distribute assets before your death
- Useful to manage finances for someone unable to do so on their own
- Can protect and preserve your assets

## TYPES OF TRUSTS

A living trust is established during the grantor's lifetime and provides a flexible way to manage assets and ease their transfer after the grantor's death. Other examples include special needs, charitable trusts, and irrevocable life insurance trusts.

## CREATING A TRUST

A lawyer specializing in estate planning is your best resource for creating a trust. An estate lawyer can guide you through the best type of trust for your circumstances and the most effective way to manage your assets in the event of your death.

## A WILL VS. A TRUST

A will is a legal document that directs the disposal of assets after your death. A trust is a legal arrangement where a trustee manages your assets and handles their care and distribution for your beneficiaries.

## CHOOSING A TRUSTEE

The trustee has a legal responsibility to manage the trust in the best interest solely of the beneficiaries. Choose someone trustworthy, organized, and capable of making sound decisions.