

PRESS RELEASE

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Celebrate Great American Smokeout – Thursday, November 20, 2014

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

JACKSON (November 18, 2014) – The American Cancer Society will celebrate the 38th Anniversary of the Great American Smokeout on Thursday, November 20th by encouraging smokers or tobacco users to mark their calendars and make a plan to quit. Advanced planning increases the chance of successfully quitting for the 24 hour day. In quitting, smokers and tobacco users will be taking an important step towards a healthier life – one that can lead to reducing cancer risk.

Tobacco use remains the single most preventable cause of disease and premature death in Michigan, killing more than 14,500 residents each year. According to the CDC's 2012 Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, 23.3% of Michigan adults, and 14% of Michigan youth smoke cigarettes. However, more than half of these users have tried to quit for at least one day during the past year. The 2014 Michigan Profile for Healthy Youth data in Jackson County showed that approximately 9% of 9th graders and 14% of 11th graders reported they had used tobacco in the past 30 days. **The total economic cost of smoking in Michigan is over seven billion dollars.**

Due to nicotine's highly addictive nature, most users make several quit attempts before they are successful. "The Great American Smokeout is an opportunity to remind tobacco users there are resources and support available to help them quit," stated Rhonda Rudolph, Coordinator for the Jackson Tobacco Reduction Coalition. "Quitting tobacco use is the best thing you can do for your health. Within minutes to hours after quitting blood pressure, heart rate, and carbon monoxide levels decrease, and the long term benefits continue over time, including improved lung function and decreased risk of cancer and heart disease," according to Ms. Rudolph.

Research shows that while quitting can be difficult for tobacco users due to their long-term practice of smoking and tobacco use, people can increase their success in quitting with help. Quitters are most successful when using a combination of therapies, including resources such as nicotine replacement, counseling, self-help materials, and a strong support network of family and friends.

Resources available to Michigan residents include:

- The Michigan Department of Community Health (MDCH) Tobacco Quitline, 1-800-784-8669, continues to provide free telephone coaching for the uninsured and those with Medicaid and Medicare, and free nicotine replacement medications for those who qualify. Information on quitting smoking and a free printable Michigan Smoker's Quit Kit are available through MDCH by visiting: www.michigan.gov/tobacco
- BecomeAnEX.org is a free, interactive website that shows smokers how to re-learn life without cigarettes. The site, developed by Legacy in partnership with Mayo Clinic, offers a free, personalized quit plan and an online support community to help people prepare to quit and stay quit.
- Allegiance Tobacco Treatment Services are free counseling services available to anyone using tobacco products in any form. For more information, call (517) 788-4707.
- The American Cancer Society has tools available to help with quitting. For more information contact the American Cancer Society at 1-800-227-2345.

For more information about the Great American Smokeout, contact Rhonda Rudolph at (517) 768-2131. The toll-free telephone number for the American Cancer Society is 1-800-ACS-2345. Information also is available on the American Cancer Society's Web site at www.cancer.org.

Here are 10 tips to help you quit provided by the American Cancer Society

(Also listed at www.community.acsevents.org/site/PageServer?pagename=C_EA_GAS_Quit_QuitTips)

- 1) **Talk to your doctor.** Before you begin your plan to quit smoking, check with your doctor to see what might be the best approach. Remember, quitting smoking is very personal and there isn't one perfect method.
- 2) **Don't keep it a secret.** Tell everyone you know you're quitting. This will give you a support system and make you more accountable, which will make you more likely to stick with it.
- 3) **You're not alone.** Although it may feel like you're all by yourself, you're not. There is lots of help out there. Many communities and health care organizations have resources to help you quit. Call your American Cancer Society to find out what is available in your area.
- 4) **Consider using medication to help you quit.** There are prescriptions and over-the-counter medications that can help you deal with withdrawal symptoms or even help reduce the urge to smoke. Again, you'll always want to talk to your doctor first, but some medicine could help.
- 5) **Dump the memories.** Clear the places where you usually smoke of anything that reminds you of cigarettes such as lighters, ashtrays, or matches. Ask other smokers not to smoke around you, and clean your house and car thoroughly to remove the smell of cigarettes.
- 6) **Avoid places where smokers gather.** Go to the movies or other places where smoking is not allowed.
- 7) **Stay calm and stay busy.** You may have some excess nervous energy, but that's good! Use it for something constructive like going to the gym, working on that project you've been putting off, or taking a relaxing walk. Find things to keep your hands busy as well, like video games or journal writing.
- 8) **When the urge to smoke strikes, do something else.** If you feel a craving for a cigarette coming on, take a deep breath, smile and then do something else. Call a friend, do some pushups, walk up a flight of stairs or touch your toes. Anything that will take your mind off the craving.
- 9) **One will hurt. Don't fall into the trap.** That one cigarette can get you back in the habit of smoking full time. Keep a supply of oral substitutes like carrots, apples, raisins, or gum handy.
- 10) **Water, water everywhere.** Drink lots of fluids. It can help clean your system out and curb some cravings. Water is best -- stay away from coffee and alcohol. It's not good to supplement one harmful addiction with another.

It's not easy to quit smoking. If you stumble along the way, don't punish yourself. Just try again.

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