

eHouseCall

YOUR MONTHLY GUIDE TO HEALTH CARE AWARENESS

Ready to Quit? Get Started Today!



Every year, on the third Thursday of November, smokers across the nation take part in the American Cancer Society's Great American Smokeout event. The annual event challenges people to quit smoking on that day, or use the day to make a plan to quit.

This year's Great American Smokeout is the perfect time to commit to living a smoke-free life. Here are some tips to get started:

Make the decision to quit – think about all of the reasons you want to quit and write them down so you can look at them every time you want to smoke.

Pick a quit date – once you have made the decision to quit, it is important to pick a quit date. It's important to pick a date that isn't too far in the future and can give you time to change your mind, but gives you some time to prepare. Try picking a date within the next month, circle that day on your calendar and make a real commitment to quit.

Make a plan – decide which methods you will try to help you quit. Nicotine replacement therapy, prescription drugs or other methods are all available to help you. You should also tell your family and friends about your commitment to quitting. They can help give you support and encouragement. No matter which method(s) you decide to try, make sure you have a plan in place for how you will handle the urge to smoke. Doing so can help increase your chances of quitting for good.

The American Cancer Society recommends trying the four D's when you get the urge to smoke:

1. Delay for 10 minutes, repeat if necessary.
2. Deep breath
3. Drink water
4. Do something else

DidUKnow?

THE DO'S AND DON'TS OF HELPING SOMEONE QUIT

Here are some general hints from the American Cancer Society if you have a friend or family member trying to quit smoking:

- Do ask the person how they are doing and feeling.
- Do tell them that you're there to listen if they want to talk.
- Do spend time with the person to help keep their mind off smoking.
- Do encourage and celebrate along the way.
- Don't doubt the smoker's ability to quit.
- Don't smoke around the person.
- Don't judge, tease, or scold.
- Don't take it personally if they are agitated during withdrawal.
- Don't offer advice, just ask how you can help.

Information Sources

Cancer.org, *Benefits of Quitting Smoking Over Time* (July 2018): www.cancer.org

Cancer.org, *Deciding to Quit and Making a Plan* (July 2018): www.cancer.org

Cancer.org, *Helping a Smoker Quit: Do's and Don'ts* (July 2018) www.cancer.org

Doctor's Bag



by Robert Sorrenti, MD
Medical Director

According to numerous reports issued by the Surgeon General, a smoker who kicks the habit for good enjoys almost immediate – and then lifelong – benefits.

- 20 minutes after the last cigarette, heart rate and blood pressure drop to a level close to that before the last cigarette.
- 12 hours after, the carbon monoxide level in the blood drops to normal.
- Within 3 months, circulation improves and lung function increases up to 30%.
- In 1 to 9 months, the risk of heart attack decreases.
- After 1 year, the excess risk of coronary heart disease is half that of a smoker.
- After 5 years, the risk of stroke is reduced to that of a non-smoker.
- After 10 years, the lung cancer death rate is about half that of a continuing smoker.
- After 15 years, the risk of coronary heart disease is that of a non-smoker.

And those are just the health benefits. Don't forget about all the money you will save. Bottom line, it's never too late to quit smoking. Start enjoying the benefits now.