



Central Michigan District Health Department

Promoting Healthy Families, Healthy Communities



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PRESS RELEASE FOR LOCAL MEDIA

To: Local Media

From: Central Michigan District Health Department

RE: The Great American Smokeout®

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THE GREAT AMERICAN SMOKEOUT®

This year Central Michigan District Health Department (CMDHD) would like to celebrate a day of change and inspiration. On November 18th, 2021, the American Cancer Society will be celebrating the Great American Smokeout® where millions of tobacco users will attempt to go 24 hours smoke free. This is an event that has been celebrated for over 40 years on the third Thursday of November. Each year this day focuses on more than just not smoking – it is a day of transformation and a start to a new, healthier life. Our staff at CMDHD would like your participation in this year's Great American Smokeout®.

On this day we encourage you to attempt to go 24 hours smoke free or to reach out to family, friends, health care providers, or other supportive groups to create a plan to quit in the future. Try taking that first step to living a healthier life and help reduce your risk of cancer. This is also an opportunity to learn about the resources and tools that are available locally and virtually to help quit and stay quit.

Addiction to nicotine found in cigarettes is said to be one of the strongest and deadliest addictions a person can have which can make the challenge of quitting even more difficult. The CDC reports that in 2018, nearly 34.2 million adults in the United States report being current tobacco users and 16 million of those report that they are living with a smoking-related disease such as chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, or COPD. The American Cancer Society states that while the rates of cigarette smoking have declined over the past several decades, from 42% in 1965 to 13.7% in 2019, the gains have been inconsistent. This means that there is still a lot of improvements to be made and it's going to take community wide involvement to make it happen. Some examples of how you can be involved in your community include organizing community groups to advocate adoption of tobacco-control ordinances, sharing posts on social media that promote public awareness of the dangers of tobacco use, and encourage your local schools to offer evidenced-based prevention programs that will help reduce the number of youth who start using tobacco.

Please visit us at our website www.cmdhd.org

Quitting tobacco use takes commitment and starts with creating a strong quit plan. It may take many attempts and will require a lot of support to be successful. There are also pharmaceutical and nicotine replacement treatment options available to help with quitting, however, it is important to speak with your healthcare provider to see what the best option is for you.

It is important to create your quit plan one step at a time. The first step should focus on when you want to quit. Once you have picked a quit date it is important to let friends and family know that you are planning to quit. This way they can provide support and encouragement to you along your journey to being tobacco free. Then you will want to remove reminders of smoking such as cigarettes, lighters, ash trays, etc. Taking time to deep clean will also be helpful to remove the smell of tobacco. Take time to focus on why you want to quit and what is motivating you to do so, those reminders will help get you through those challenging times when you need to dig deep to keep going. Be aware of withdrawal symptoms and how to cope with them. Having that support will help get you through some of the most challenging times on your path to quitting.

Celebrate the small victories and be proud for each step you are taking to living a healthier life. Studies show that if a tobacco-user can go 24 hours without using, they are more open to the idea of giving up tobacco, perhaps for an even longer period. Sometimes, small steps forward can work better than traditional “all or nothing” attempts. Whatever you choose, know there are resources and programs out there to help you throughout your journey to living smoke free.

For personal advice, local resources, and one-on-one counseling, try calling the Michigan Quit Now help line at 1-800-QUIT-NOW or visit the American Cancer Society® at www.cancer.org to see more resources and tools that will help turn your plan into action.

This article has been brought to you by Central Michigan District Health Department, which serves the counties of Arenac, Clare, Gladwin, Isabella, Osceola, and Roscommon. Visit our website at www.cmdhd.org, LIKE Central Michigan District Health Department on Facebook and follow us on Twitter @CMiDHD.

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