Central Michigan
District Health Department
Promoting Healthy Families, Healthy Communities

Jennifer Morse, MD, MPH, FAAFP
Medical Director

Steve Hall, RS, MS
Health Officer

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

American Cancer Society Betting Millions of American Smokers Can Kick the Habit
During Annual Day of Action

For millions of Americans who use tobacco, November 15th is a day full of hope. It's not anything related to Thanksgiving, but it can become a day of thanks. November 15th, 2018 marks the 42nd annual "Great American Smokeout" presented by the American Cancer Society (ACS). Each year, since 1976, this day has been a chance for millions of tobacco users and their families to support each other in an attempt to go tobacco free for 24 hours.

The third Thursday of November is the day smokers try to quit for 24 hours straight, or to get together with family and friends to make a plan to quit in the future. By quitting, even for one day, smokers take a step towards a healthier life – one that can lead to reducing cancer risk.

Tobacco use is the single largest preventable cause of disease and early death in the United States. However, about 37.8 million Americans still smoke cigarettes. More than 16 million Americans live with a smoking-related disease. Each year more than 480,000 people in the United States die from illnesses caused by smoking. This means each year smoking causes about 1 out of 5 deaths in the US. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention tell us that most tobacco users begin smoking or chewing before the age of 19, and that 70% of smokers tried to quit last year, but only about 6% of them were successful without help. Not everyone can do it all by themselves. It takes willpower and support to quit. The American Cancer Society (ACS) asks tobacco users to work with family and friends to help them kick the habit one day at a time. Quitting is tough, and they urge tobacco users to use the "Great American Smokeout" as a chance to talk and plan on how to quit for good.

Some ideas on how families can work together are walking or bicycling, getting involved in group activities away from home to keep your mind occupied, and understanding what your "triggers" are. Triggers can be things around you that remind you or make it easier for you to smoke. Look at your daily habits like when you smoke, where you light up and who you smoke with and then try to make small changes to develop new healthier habits.

Even cutting down on the number of cigarettes smoked in a day is a victory. Even a short-term move away from tobacco can bring big results. Cutting down on tobacco use can improve a person's senses of smell and taste overnight. In addition, a small victory like that can go a long way in giving a real sense of success to many tobacco users. 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. Not everyone can just give up tobacco all at once. They need a plan and help from those closest to them.

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 which offers more information and tools, like the Cigarette Cost Calculator, to help make quitting more personal.

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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