

Keep Your Resolution to Quit Smoking in 2008

December 26, 2007—Henderson County, NC: A popular New Year's resolution is to quit smoking. If you're a smoker, you may have resolved to quit many times, yet experienced failure because you didn't have a plan or support. The help you need to quit smoking is available, free, and as close as your phone or your health department.

The North Carolina Quitline 1-800-QUIT-NOW (1-800-784-8669) provides support, information, and encouragement to those callers ready to quit and to those who are considering quitting. When you call, you will speak to a trained tobacco quitting specialist who, upon request, will call you back to check on your quitting progress.

Even if you have tried to quit before and failed, a specialist will help you learn from your experience and make a new quit plan. Specialists don't nag or lecture. Instead they look for a quit plan that will work for you. Every time you have tried to quit smoking in the past, you have learned what worked or didn't work. This knowledge helps you get closer to being permanently tobacco-free.

For most people smoking cessation is a difficult challenge, but it is the best way to improve your health. Within 20 minutes of inhaling your last cigarette, your body begins a series of changes that continues for years. This includes a return to normal blood pressure, improved circulation, and a return to normal body temperature in the hands and feet. Within 2-12 weeks, your lung function increases up to 30 percent.

Today nearly a quarter of U.S. adults and about a third of U.S. youth continue to smoke according to the NC State Center for Health Statistics. In 2006 in North Carolina, 22.1 percent of the population smoked. Smoking rates among young adults between the ages of 18 and 24 years have increased in recent years. If current patterns continue, nearly 25 million U.S. residents will die prematurely from a smoking-related disease.

Evidence shows that quit lines are effective tools in helping smokers quit. Telephone counseling from the NC Quitline can significantly increase long-term quit rates compared to self-help materials alone.

The North Carolina Tobacco Use Quitline was launched in October 2005 by the NC Division of Public Health and the NC Health and Wellness Trust Fund. The line is available 8:00 a.m. to midnight 7 days a week at 1-800-QUIT-NOW. This service is available to help all North Carolinians of all ages quit the use of tobacco. Trained coaches speak both English and Spanish.

The Henderson County Department of Public Health is also here to help you with your decision to quit smoking in 2008. Printed materials and other resources are available to assist you. Call Tricia Stauffer, health educator, at 694-6065 for further information.

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