



Fox 17 news nashville

MEDIA RELEASE

STATE OF TENNESSEE
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
NOVEMBER 10, 2009

CONTACT: Shelley L. Walker
615.741.3111 (Office)
615.804.9972 (Cell)

TENNESSEANS URGED TO JOIN MILLIONS OF AMERICANS IN SAYING “NO” TO CIGARETTES

CALL THE TENNESSEE TOBACCO QUITLINE FOR GREAT AMERICAN SMOKEOUT

NASHVILLE, Tenn. – The Department of Health urges Tennessee smokers to take part in this year’s Great American Smokeout on November 19, 2009. The goal of this annual health observance is to encourage smokers to quit for one day in the hope they may quit for good. In Tennessee, tobacco users can call the Tennessee Tobacco QuitLine free of charge at 1-800-QUIT-NOW or 1-800-784-8669 to set a plan for how to quit.

“Tennesseans who want to start the process of quitting smoking have a powerful tool available to help them in the QuitLine,” said Health Commissioner Susan R. Cooper, MSN, RN. “Research shows that smokers who have a cessation plan and a support system have a much better chance of success with their quit attempt.”

The Tennessee Tobacco QuitLine offers personalized support for Tennessee residents who want to quit smoking by connecting them with trained coaches to guide them through the quitting process. Callers will receive ongoing professional coaching via individually scheduled calls with a quit coach personally assigned to them. This convenient and confidential service is free and available to Tennessee residents in both English and Spanish. The service is also available for the deaf and hard-of-hearing at TTY 1-877-559-3816.

Since the launch of the Tennessee Tobacco QuitLine in August 2006, more than 33,000 Tennesseans have called the service. More than 10,800 callers completed the intake process and were assigned to a quit coach, and more than 7,450 people have enrolled in the iCanQuit tobacco cessation program. QuitLine callers have complimentary access to relapse prevention techniques, printed resource materials, information on nicotine replacement therapies and other services to aid in the quitting process. One QuitLine client who has been tobacco-free since June 2008 shared this story of her success:

“I went through your program; I thoroughly enjoyed it. I’ve smoked since I was 9 years old. This is the only program I was able to go through and quit smoking. I really enjoyed working with your coach. The coach that I was assigned to was excellent; she was a lot of help.”

Janet S., Dickson

Smoking cessation services are also available at Tennessee’s county health department clinics. All patients are screened for tobacco use and asked if they are interested in quitting. Those who

– more –

CORDELL HULL BUILDING, 3RD FLOOR
425 FIFTH AVENUE NORTH
NASHVILLE, TN 37243
WWW.TENNESSEE.GOV/HEALTH

want to quit are evaluated by medical professionals to determine the best course of treatment to help them stop smoking. These services are offered on a sliding fee scale based on income.

Smoking is responsible for almost one in five deaths in the United States, and according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, smoking accounts for approximately 9,400 deaths in Tennessee every year, nearly half of which are due to lung cancer. Secondhand smoke is another serious problem in Tennessee. An estimated 1,730 Tennesseans die every year due to exposure to secondhand smoke.

The healing process begins almost immediately after quitting smoking. Within 20 minutes of giving up tobacco, elevated heart rate and blood pressure decrease; in 12 hours, the carbon monoxide level in your blood drops to normal; within two weeks to three months, circulation improves and lung function increases; and in one year after quitting, the risk of coronary heart disease is cut in half.

The Tennessee Tobacco QuitLine (1-800-QUIT-NOW or 1-800-784-8669) is a statewide toll-free telephone tobacco cessation treatment program made possible through the Tennessee Department of Health. There is no charge to callers for services and callers have unlimited access to a quit coach through the QuitLine. Hours are Monday through Friday, 7 a.m. to 10 p.m., Saturday 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. and Sunday 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Central time.

###

This news release can be accessed online at <http://news.tennesseeanytme.org/taxonomy/term/30>.