



How to Participate in

★ THE GREAT AMERICAN ★

SMOKEOUT

QUIT FOR A DAY. QUIT FOR LIFE.

TIPS AND RESOURCES ON QUITTING SMOKING

WHAT IS THE GREAT AMERICAN SMOKEOUT?

- The Great American Smokeout is held every year on the third Thursday of November.
- Thousands of smokers around the country use this day as motivation to quit smoking—either for the day, or for good.
- VA encourages Veterans to set a goal of quitting during the Great American Smokeout.
- Let us help you succeed. Talk to your provider about the many resources VA can provide to help you quit.

WHY SHOULD I QUIT SMOKING?

- Fact: Smoking shortens your life. On average, smokers die 13-15 years earlier than non-smokers.
- Smoking harms nearly every organ of the body and increases your risk of lung disease, heart disease, stroke, cancer, and other serious conditions.
- The harmful effects of smoking don't end with you. Nearly 50,000 Americans die each year as a result of breathing other people's smoke. When you quit, the people around you, especially children, will be healthier.
- Along with the many health benefits to you and your loved ones, there are also financial reasons to quit smoking. You can save thousands of dollars a year by not buying cigarettes, missing fewer days of work due to illness, and paying less for insurance.

I'VE BEEN SMOKING FOR YEARS. WHY SHOULD I QUIT NOW?

- No matter how old you are or how long you have been smoking, quitting can dramatically improve your health.
- It is never too late to quit. In fact, older smokers are more likely to be successful than younger smokers.
- If you have tried quitting before, try again. It's hard work, but more than three million Americans successfully quit smoking every year.
- Let this year's Great American Smokeout be the motivation you need to finally quit for good!

HOW CAN I QUIT?

- Talk to your VA health care provider today. We have helped thousands of Veterans quit smoking. We know what works.
- Besides working with your VA health care provider, there are things you can do to get ready to quit:
 - ◆ Set a quit date.
 - ◆ Talk to your friends, family, and co-workers about getting support.
 - ◆ Think about the challenges you will face. Make a plan to overcome them.
 - ◆ Think back to your past attempts at quitting. What worked? What didn't?
 - ◆ Keep in mind all the reasons for quitting that are most important to you.
 - ◆ Remove all cigarettes, lighters, and ashtrays from your home, car, and work.
 - ◆ Make sure that you get enough rest and keep plenty of healthy snacks available.
 - ◆ Consider beginning a regular exercise program.
 - ◆ Put the money that you would normally spend on cigarettes in a jar and watch it increase. Plan to spend it on something to reward yourself.

HOW CAN VA HELP?

- **VA provides:**
 - ◆ Effective medication. Your provider can give you a prescription for nicotine gum, patch, or lozenge, or other medications to help you quit smoking. These will help reduce your cravings and will greatly increase your chances of successfully quitting and staying quit.
 - ◆ Free counseling. Your VA health care provider can give you advice about what will help you quit or give you a referral to a VA smoking cessation program.
 - ◆ Convenient care. We want to make it easy for you to get the help you need to quit. Talk to your provider about available options that you may find convenient.
- **To find the nearest VA health care facility:**
 - ◆ Visit the VA Facility Locator at www.va.gov/directory.
 - ◆ Call toll-free **1-877-222-8387**.

WHERE CAN I LEARN MORE?

- Visit the VA Web site for tips and resources to help you quit.
www.publichealth.va.gov/smoking/quit_smoking.asp

