



CHCHD News

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Make Plans to Kick the Habit on November 17th

Chattanooga, TN – The Chattanooga-Hamilton County Health Department joins the American Cancer Society in urging smokers to make plans to quit during the Great American Smokeout on November 17. This year marks the 36th annual health observance. Twenty percent of adults and 17 percent of high school students in Hamilton County still smoke, according to the 2011 County Health Rankings and Youth Risk Behavior Survey. Quitting smoking is a challenge, but it can be done.

"A new report by the CDC finds that 69 percent of adult smokers want to quit," said Jay Collum, tobacco control coordinator at the Chattanooga-Hamilton County Health Department. "However, only 6.2 percent of those smokers are successful because they don't take advantage of available medicine and counseling," said Collum.

By combining tobacco cessation counseling and medicine, smokers could double or triple their chances of quitting, according to the CDC report.

Tobacco use is still the single largest preventable cause of disease and premature death in the United States, according to the American Cancer Society, yet more than 46 million Americans still smoke. Lung cancer is the leading cause of cancer death in the United States for both men and women. Tobacco use accounts for at least 30 percent of all cancer deaths and 87 percent of lung cancer deaths.

"The dangers of tobacco have been documented, but if you have a plan and you anticipate the challenges, you can successfully quit smoking," said Collum. "It doesn't matter how old you are or how long you've been a smoker, quitting can help you live longer and be healthier," Collum added.

People who stop smoking before age 50 cut their risk of dying in the next 15 years in half compared with those who keep smoking, according to the American Cancer Society.

For more resources on quitting smoking call the FREE Tennessee Tobacco Quit Line 1-800-QUIT-NOW, or visit <http://health.hamiltontn.org/chs/TobaccoPrevention.aspx>

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