



McHenry County Department of Health

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Quitters always WIN!

Great American Smokeout Nov. 18

WOODSTOCK IL – McHenry County Department of Health (MCDH) and the American Cancer Society (ACS) recognize November 18th as the 35th annual Great American Smokeout. Smokers are encouraged to use the date to make a plan to quit, or to plan in advance and quit smoking that day. By doing so, smokers will be taking an important step towards a healthier life – one that can lead to reducing cancer risk. Quitting smoking is not easy, but it can be done. To have the best chance of quitting successfully, you need to know what you're up against, what your options are, and where to go for help.

According to U.S. Surgeon General's Office, the effects of quitting begin almost immediately and improve over time.

- after 20 minutes – heart rate and blood pressure drop
- after 12 hours – carbon monoxide level in your blood drops to normal
- after 2 weeks to 3 months – circulation improves, lung function increases
- after 1 year – risk of coronary heart disease is half that of a smoker's
- 5 years – stroke risk is reduced to that of a non-smoker 5 to 15 years after quitting
- 10 years – lung cancer death is half that of a smoker; decrease in the risk of mouth, throat, esophagus, bladder, cervix and pancreatic cancer

Beginning January 5, 2011, MCDH and Centegra Health System will partner to provide "Quit Smoking" classes to teach practical ways to end nicotine addiction. The class offers group support and behavior modification, and also reviews the nicotine replacement products that are currently on the market. The class is taught by MCDH staff, trained in the American Lung Association's "Freedom from Smoking" program. Classes will be held at Centegra Health Bridge Fitness Center in Crystal Lake, located at 200 Congress Parkway, on Wednesdays, from 6pm-7:30pm. A \$25 course fee, payable at the first class, is refundable if all seven sessions are attended.

For more information, and to register, call 1-877-CENTEGRA, or visit www.mcdh.info.

To speak with a counselor immediately, call the Illinois Tobacco Quitline at 1-866-QUIT-YES.

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"Working to prevent disease and promote health and safety for all people of McHenry County since 1966."