

American Cancer Society and National Jewish Health Partner for Great American Smokeout

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DENVER — National Jewish Health, the nation's #1 respiratory hospital, and the American Cancer Society, the official sponsor of birthdays, mark the 34th Great American Smokeout on Nov. 19 by encouraging smokers 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 respiratory disease and cancer risk, and creating more birthdays. Researchers say that quitting smoking can increase life expectancy - smokers who quit at age 35 gain an average of eight years of life expectancy; those who quit at age 55 gain about five years; and even long term smokers who quit at 65 gain three years. The American Cancer Society and National Jewish Health both have resources available to help smokers begin their journey towards quitting and staying well, including free help from trained counselors through the American Cancer Society Quitline® (1-800-227-2345), the Colorado QuitLine (1-800-QUIT-NOW), and online at www.coquitline.org and www.cancer.org/GreatAmericans.

Research shows that people who stop smoking before age 50 can cut their risk of dying in the next 15 years in half compared with those who continue to smoke. Smokers who quit also reduce their risk of lung cancer by about 50 percent, emphysema, chronic bronchitis, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, heart disease and other cancers.

"We know that quitting smoking is tough and that most smokers have to try several times before quitting for good," said Karen Hill, Regional Vice President of the Denver American Cancer Society. "The American Cancer Society offers a variety of effective resources ranging from online tips and tools to personalized telephone counseling by trained specialists - our Quitline® has helped over 380,000 smokers with tobacco cessation counseling. We hope that smokers will use the Great American Smokeout to map out a course of action that will help them to quit, and in turn to stay well and celebrate more birthdays."

"We endorse the American Cancer Society's Great American Smokeout and its mission to encourage smokers to quit." said David Tinkelman, MD, Vice President of Health Initiatives at National Jewish Health. "Colorado Quitline counselors support smokers as they make their decisions to quit, create and follow personalized plans to quit, and create new healthy habits to replace the old tobacco habits." The Colorado QuitLine at National Jewish Health has provided tobacco cessation help to 200,000 people in Colorado. Of those, 57,600 Coloradans have quit using tobacco entirely, a quit rate of 36 percent and healthcare and indirect cost savings of more than \$207 million.

The American Cancer Society created the trademarked concept for and held its first Great American Smokeout in 1976 as a way to inspire and encourage smokers to quit for a day. One million people quit smoking for a day at the 1976 event in California. The Great American Smokeout encourages smokers to commit to making a long-term plan to quit smoking for good.

Important facts about tobacco use:

- Tobacco use remains the single largest preventable cause of disease and premature death in the U.S.
- Cigarette smoking accounts for about 443,000 premature deaths - including 49,400 in nonsmokers.
- Thirty percent of cancer deaths, including 87 percent of lung cancer deaths, can be attributed to tobacco.
- Smoking also accounts for \$193 billion in healthcare expenditures and productivity losses.
- Great progress is being made in reducing tobacco use in the U.S., with adult smoking rates in 2007 declining among all adults to 19.8 percent.

About the American Cancer Society

The American Cancer Society combines an unyielding passion with nearly a century of experience to save lives and end suffering from cancer. As a global grassroots force of more than three million volunteers, we fight for every birthday threatened by every cancer in every community. We save lives by helping people stay well by preventing

cancer or detecting it early; helping people get well by being there for them during and after a cancer diagnosis; by finding cures through investment in groundbreaking discovery; and by fighting back by rallying lawmakers to pass laws to defeat cancer and by rallying communities worldwide to join the fight. As the nation's largest non-governmental investor in cancer research, contributing about \$3.4 billion, we turn what we know about cancer into what we do. As a result, about 11 million people in America who have had cancer and countless more who have avoided it will be celebrating birthdays this year. To learn more about us or to get help, call us any time, day or night, at 1-800-227-2345 or visit cancer.org.

About National Jewish Health

National Jewish Health is known worldwide for treatment of patients with respiratory, cardiac, immune and related disorders, and for groundbreaking medical research. Founded in 1899 as a nonprofit hospital, National Jewish remains the only facility in the world dedicated exclusively to these disorders. For 12 consecutive years, U.S. News & World Report has ranked National Jewish the #1 respiratory hospital in the nation. Scholarly publisher Thomson Scientific has ranked National Jewish among the 25 most influential research institutions in the world in its areas of focus. For more information about National Jewish Health, visit njhealth.org.

National Jewish Health is the leading respiratory hospital in the nation. Founded 124 years ago as a nonprofit hospital, National Jewish Health today is the only facility in the world dedicated exclusively to groundbreaking medical research and treatment of patients with respiratory, cardiac, immune and related disorders. Patients and families come to National Jewish Health from around the world to receive cutting-edge, comprehensive, coordinated care. To learn more, visit the [media resources page](#).

Media Contacts

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