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# Email Alert

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Updating you about current events in the battle against addictions

## The Great American Smokeout

On Thursday November 19, 2009 the American Cancer Society will celebrate the Annual Great American Smokeout. The main purpose of the Great American Smokeout is to highlight the dangers associated with tobacco use and the challenges associated with trying to quit. Studies have shown that about 40% of smokers have tried to quit smoking in the past year. On November 19, smokers who want to quit are urged to call the American Cancer Society Quitline at 1-800-QUIT-NOW. Callers will speak to a trained counselor and receive free confidential help in developing a personal plan to quit smoking. Resources like Quitline can more than double a person's chances of successfully quitting tobacco.

In the past few decades, there have been significant reductions in smoking behavior here in the United States. In fact, between 1965 and 2005, the percentage of adults who smoke actually declined from 42% to 21%. However, tobacco use remains the single largest preventable cause of disease and premature death in the United States. Each year, smoking accounts for an estimated 443,000 premature deaths, including 38,000 deaths among nonsmokers as a result of secondhand smoke. Half of all Americans who continue to smoke will die from smoking-related diseases.

Another objective of the Great American Smokeout is to protect the public from exposure to second hand smoke by supporting local smoke-free policies. According to the American Cancer Society, support of smoke-free laws and higher tobacco taxes are critical to their efforts to make it harder for people to smoke and to protect non-smokers from the dangers associated with exposure to tobacco smoke. The majority of communities in the United States are now covered by smoke-free laws. Forty-three states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico have raised tobacco taxes since 2000. Smokefree workplace laws and other legislation help encourage smokers to quit while also helping to protect Americans from secondhand smoke.

Source:

[www.cancer.org](http://www.cancer.org)

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