



# Did You Know

November 2011

In the United States, approximately \$96 billion is spent each year on cigarette smoking related costs. Each year, on the third Thursday of every November the *Great American Smokeout* is celebrated. The idea for it began in the early 1970s by a newspaper publisher from Minnesota. She believed that by designating this one day as the *Great American Smokeout* it would challenge people to lead healthier lives by quitting smoking. By 1977 the American Cancer Society began sponsoring it by promoting the benefits of not smoking to the country and encouraging people to quit. This year the Great American Smokeout will be celebrated on November 17<sup>th</sup>.

While the number of smokers has drastically decreased from the 1970s to now, there are many more who still need to quit. There are numerous health benefits related to quitting smoking, some even happen right away! About twenty minutes after a person smokes their last cigarette, their body already responds to the decision to quit smoking. Their blood pressure decreases, their pulse rate slows, and the temperature of their hands and feet increase. Eight hours after someone quits smoking, their blood has begun to recover from the effects of smoking. The levels of both carbon monoxide and oxygen in the bloodstream return to normal. Within 24 hours, the chance of a heart attack has already decreased. About 48 hours after someone quits smoking, nerve endings deadened by the habit have begun to regenerate and their sense of taste and smell has already improved.

## Statistics:

- Approximately 400,000 people die each year from their smoking habit.
- The number of New York State Residents who smoked cigarettes decreased by 20% between 2000 and 2008.
- There are over 4,000 chemicals in tobacco smoke and at least 69 of those chemicals are known to cause cancer.
- In 2008, the five largest cigarette companies spent \$9.94 billion dollars, or about \$27 million dollars per day, on advertising and marketing their products.
- Approximately 11% of women smoke during their pregnancy in the United States.
- Eleven percent of children aged 6 years and under are exposed to secondhand smoke in their homes on a regular basis.
- Children who are exposed to secondhand smoke can experience asthma attacks, respiratory tract infections such as pneumonia and bronchitis, inner ear infections and even premature death!

## What You Can Do:

- Make the decision to quit TODAY, or use November 17<sup>th</sup>, the day of the *Great American Smokeout*, to be your day to quit!
- Contact 1-866-NY Quits (1-866-697-8487) for more information on how to quit smoking.
- Educate others on the damaging health effects of smoking.

Sources: [www.nysmokefree.com](http://www.nysmokefree.com); [www.cancer.org](http://www.cancer.org); [www.tobaccofreekid.org](http://www.tobaccofreekid.org)

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The Erie County Council for the Prevention of Alcohol and Substance Abuse, Inc., publishes Did You Know, a regular update about alcohol & other drugs - - America's #1 public health problem. ECCPASA • 1625 Hertel Ave., Buffalo, NY 14216 • 716-831-2298 • [www.eccpasa.org](http://www.eccpasa.org)