



WISEWOMAN UPDATE

November 2006

Lung Cancer Awareness Month, Great American Smokeout Observed in November

Lung cancer is the leading cause of cancer death for both men and women. In fact, lung cancer takes the lives of more Americans each year than breast, prostate, colon, liver, and kidney cancers combined. Smoking is the number one cause of lung cancer. More than 95% of lung cancers that occur among current smokers were found to be the result of smoking.

The best way to prevent lung cancer is not to smoke and to avoid people who do. The Michigan Tobacco Quit Line (1-800-480-QUIT) offers free smoking cessation counseling services to all Michigan residents interested in quitting smoking.

Did you know that November 16, 2006 marks the 30th annual Great American Smokeout? Sponsored by the American Cancer Society, the Great American Smokeout challenges smokers to smoke less or quit smoking for the day. For more information about the Great American Smokeout, please visit www.cancer.org.

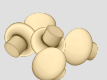
Stats At-A-Glance

Currently for Fiscal Year (FY) 2006, we have entered screening information on 3,665 women into our data system. That puts us at 92.8% of our caseload goal of 3,949. As a reminder, this issue of the WISEWOMAN Update will provide the last screening statistics for FY06. The official caseload count for FY06 will be available in mid November.

The CDC performance indicator for rescreening is greater than or equal to 75%. Our current rescreening rate for program duration is 35.45%. That is up from 34.67% last month! Remember to make use of the WISEWOMAN Rescreen Reminder list that is posted with the Quality Improvement Reports each month.

The CDC performance indicator for the percentage of women who attend at least one lifestyle counseling session is 75%. So far in FY06, 91.1% of women have attended at least one counseling session. Good work!

The Michigan performance indicator for clients who adopt a healthier lifestyle – as evidenced by improvements in behaviors self-reported on the Healthy Lifestyles Assessment – is 50%. We are currently at 52.2% for program duration.





Helping a Smoker Quit: Do's and Don'ts

General Hints for Friends and Family

- Do respect that the quitter is in charge. This is their lifestyle change and their challenge, not yours.
- Do ask the person whether she wants you to call or visit regularly to see how she is doing. Let the person know that it's okay to call you whenever she needs to hear encouraging words.
- Do help the quitter get what she needs, such as hard candy to suck on, straws to chew on, fresh veggies cut up and kept cold in the refrigerator, etc.
- Do spend time doing things with the quitter to keep her mind off smoking – go to the movies or take a walk to get past a craving (what many call a “nicotine fit”).
- Do help the quitter with a few chores, some child care, cooking – whatever will help lighten the stress of quitting.
- Do celebrate along the way. Quitting is a BIG DEAL!
- Don't take the quitter's grumpiness personally during her nicotine withdrawal. The symptoms will pass in about two weeks.
- Don't offer advice. Just ask how you can help with the plan or program they are using.

If Your Smoker Relapses...

Research shows that most people try to quit five to seven times before they are successful. Don't give up your efforts to encourage and support your loved one. If the person you care about fails to quit:

- Do praise her for trying to quit, and for whatever length of time (days, weeks, or months) of not smoking.
- Do encourage her to try again. Don't say, “If you try again...” Say, “When you try again...” Studies show that most people who don't succeed in quitting are ready to try again in the near future.
- Do encourage her to learn from the attempt. Things a person learns from a failed attempt to quit may help her be successful in a future attempt.



Why Is It So Hard To Quit Smoking?

Mark Twain said, "Quitting smoking is easy. I've done it a thousand times." Maybe you've tried to quit too. Why is quitting and staying quit hard for so many people? The answer is nicotine.

Nicotine

Nicotine is a drug found naturally in tobacco. It is highly addictive – as addictive as heroin or cocaine. Over time, the body becomes physically and psychologically dependent on nicotine. Studies have shown that smokers must overcome both of these to be successful at quitting and staying quit.

When smoke is inhaled, nicotine is carried deep into the lungs, where it is absorbed quickly into the bloodstream and carried throughout the body. Nicotine affects many parts of the body, including your heart and blood vessels, your hormonal system, your metabolism, and your brain. Nicotine can be found in breast milk and in cervix mucous secretions of smokers. During pregnancy, nicotine freely crosses the placenta and has been found in amniotic fluid and the umbilical cord blood of newborn infants.

Several different factors can affect the rate of metabolism and excretion of nicotine. In general, a regular smoker will have nicotine or its by-products present in the body for about 3 to 4 days after stopping.

Nicotine produces pleasurable feelings that make the smoker want to smoke more. It also acts as a kind of depressant by interfering with the flow of information between nerve cells. As the nervous system adapts to nicotine, smokers tend to increase the number of cigarettes they smoke, and hence the amount of nicotine in their blood. After a while, the smoker develops a tolerance to the drug, which leads to an increase in smoking over time. Eventually, the smoker reaches a certain nicotine level and then smokes to maintain this level of nicotine.

Nicotine Withdrawal

When smokers try to cut back or quit, the absence of nicotine leads to withdrawal symptoms. Withdrawal is both physical and mental. Physically, the body is reacting to the absence of nicotine. Psychologically, the smoker is faced with giving up a habit, which is a major change in behavior. Both must be dealt with if quitting is to be successful.

Withdrawal symptoms can include any of the following:

- dizziness (may only last 1-2 days in the beginning)
- depression
- feelings of frustration and anger
- irritability
- trouble sleeping
- trouble concentrating
- restlessness
- headache
- tiredness
- increased appetite

These symptoms can lead the smoker to again start smoking cigarettes to boost blood levels of nicotine back to a level where there are no symptoms.





Staying Quit Over the Holidays



The first few weeks after quitting smoking can be difficult for anyone. This may be especially tough during the holiday season, when stress and the temptation to overindulge are there for everyone. Some special approaches can help you celebrate the holidays without giving in to the urge to smoke. Many of these strategies can also be helpful throughout the year.

Celebrate being an ex-smoker and try these tips to keep smoking off your mind:

- **Be a host.** Consider hosting the family dinner to keep you occupied. Shopping and cooking will certainly keep you busy. If you would prefer being a guest this year, consider making a special dish to take with you.
- **Don't overindulge.** Without smoking, you might have a tendency to go overboard with the holiday feasting. Be aware of how much you are eating and drinking; it's easy to give in to the other temptations. If you do overindulge, forgive yourself. Remember...next year won't be as hard.
- **Try staying away from alcohol** by sticking to club soda, punch without alcohol, or apple cider. This will curb the urge to light up when drinking and will help keep off the extra pounds.
- **Avoid spicy and sugary foods.** These tend to enhance the cravings for cigarettes.
- **Nibble on low-calorie foods**, such as carrot sticks, apples, and other healthy snacks, to satisfy the munchies without putting on the extra pounds.
- **Stretch out meals.** Eating slowly and pausing between bites will make the meal more satisfying. For dessert, grab an orange or tangerine, or crack some nuts – something that will keep your hands busy.
- **Keep busy at parties** by playing bartender, serving snacks, and meeting guests to keep your mind off smoking. If the urge to smoke presents itself, put something in your hand other than a cigarette. A bartender's mixing straw is a perfect substitute.
- **Treat yourself to something special** for staying smoke-free. As a celebration of staying quit, consider giving yourself that special something you have always wanted.
- **Don't wait until the last minute to shop.** Any added frustration can leave you wanting a cigarette. When you are ready to lose control, stop and think. Take hold of yourself and start a conversation with someone in line next to you, or take along your favorite fun magazine, book, or catalog to look through while waiting in lines.

