

## Tobacco-Free for the New Year

December 20, 2018 - The holidays and the end of the year are here, and with it come many traditions and new opportunities. The New Year is a time to try something new, make positive changes, and support our loved ones in their efforts to make healthy changes.

For tobacco users, the New Year can be a great time to quit or begin working towards quitting. Even taking small steps like making your home and car smoke-free, can set a great example and protect nonsmokers from the health harms caused by secondhand smoke exposure.

"Quitting can be hard because nicotine is very addictive, but, research shows people can be successful with help. The good news is that there are many resources available to help." stated Zoey Thayer, a Tobacco Treatment Specialist for District Health Department #10.

People who have quit are most successful when using a combination of support, including nicotine replacement (gum, lozenge or patches), counseling, self-help materials, and support from family and friends.

District Health Department #10 has a free tobacco treatment program. Tobacco treatment staff can answer questions about quitting or medications, assist with getting patches gum or lozenges and also provide counseling to help make a plan, set a quit date and provide support.

The Michigan Tobacco Quitline has free phone coaching for people that do not have health insurance, pregnant women; people enrolled in Medicaid and Medicare, veterans, cancer patients, and American Indians, and free nicotine replacement therapy to those who qualify. They also have materials and text messaging programs to help.

Tobacco use remains the single largest preventable cause of disease and premature death in Michigan, killing more than 16,200 residents each year. Thirty percent (30%) of cancer deaths in Michigan are attributable to cigarette smoking.

"The holidays can be a stressful time, but smoking doesn't have to be a part of them," said Thayer. "Calling the Michigan Tobacco Quitline or your local health department now can help people make the holidays, and 2019, tobacco-free. Quitting tobacco today will lead to a lifetime of good health."

For more information, please contact Karen Ripke, tobacco program coordinator 231-305-8659 or call the Michigan Tobacco Quitline at 1-800-QUIT-NOW (1-800-784-8669).

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