



*Cerro Gordo County
Department of Public Health*

MEDIA RELEASE

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Quitting is Hard – Quitline Can Help

Call 1-800-QUITNOW

(Mason City, Iowa) – According to the 2016 County Health Rankings, 18.5 percent of adult Iowans smoke. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) estimates nearly seven out of 10 smokers want to quit; however, quitting smoking is hard and may require several attempts. People who stop smoking often start again because of withdrawal symptoms, stress, and weight gain. Even so, benefits of quitting tobacco far outweigh the challenges. Health benefits of quitting smoking include:

- Lowered risk for lung cancer and many other types of cancer.
- Reduced risk for heart disease, stroke, and peripheral vascular disease (narrowing of the blood vessels outside your heart).
- Reduced heart disease risk within one to two years of quitting.
- Reduced respiratory symptoms, such as coughing, wheezing, and shortness of breath. While these symptoms may not disappear, they do not continue to progress at the same rate among people who quit compared with those who continue to smoke.
- Reduced risk of developing some lung diseases (such as chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, also known as COPD, one of the leading causes of death in the United States).
- Reduced risk for infertility in women of childbearing age. Women who stop smoking during pregnancy also reduce their risk of having a low birth weight baby.

Many former smokers say they were also motivated by non-health related reasons, including saving money, getting rid of yellow teeth, smelling better, and because they wanted to take control of their lives. Studies by the CDC show your chances of quitting for good are much better if you take advantage of programs that offer professional support. Quitline Iowa is one of those programs. Quitline Iowa is a free telephone support service that can help people who want to stop smoking or using tobacco with several types of quit information and services, including:

- Free support, advice, and counseling from experienced Quitline coaches

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Facebook: Cerro Gordo County Public Health • Twitter page: <http://twitter.com/CGPublicHealth>

Web site: www.cghealth.com

- A personalized quit plan
- Practical information on how to quit, including ways to cope with nicotine withdrawal
- The latest information about stop-smoking medications
- Referrals to other resources
- Mailed self-help materials
- Online Help
- You may be eligible to receive free Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRT)

According to the American Cancer Society, the decision to quit using tobacco has nearly immediate results. Within 20 minutes, your heart rate and blood pressure drop. Within 12 hours, the carbon monoxide level in your blood drops to normal. Within two to three months, your circulation improves and your lung function increases. After one year of living tobacco free, the excess risk of coronary heart disease is half that of a continuing smoker's.

Tobacco users can call 1-800-QUIT-NOW (1-800-784-8669) or visit www.quitlineiowa.org today to enroll in the program and talk to a Quit Coach®. Registration specialists and Quit Coaches are available 24 hours a day.

For more information regarding *Quitline* or other cessation methods, please call Penny McCaslin at the Cerro Gordo County Department of Public Health at (641) 421-9329 or visit our web site at www.cghealth.com.

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