



NEWS RELEASE

ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

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Make 2017 the year to quit tobacco, be healthier and wealthier

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Quitting smoking in 2017 can have immediate benefits for your health and bank account.

Within 20 minutes of quitting, heart rate and blood pressure drop. By the end of three months, circulation improves and lung function increases. With a pack of cigarettes costing \$5 or more per pack, quitting means more money to spend for other things. There is no downside to quitting tobacco.

“It can take multiple times of quitting for someone to finally stop,” said Alabama Tobacco Quitline Manager Jabari Sullen. The Alabama Department of Public Health offers free assistance to stop tobacco use through the Quitline. The Quitline helps callers develop an individualized quit plan, offers coaching, and up to eight weeks of nicotine replacement therapy (NRT) patches, if the user is medically eligible and enrolled in the coaching program. All services at the Quitline – 1-800-QUIT-NOW – are free to Alabama residents.

Services are available every day from 6 a.m. to midnight, with calls placed after these hours or on holidays returned the next business day. Quitline services are also available online at QuitNowAlabama.com. Calling 1-800-784-8669 from any Alabama area code connects to the Quitline. The Quitline schedules phone coaching sessions at convenient times for the caller. If the caller is eligible for NRT, it is mailed directly to the caller’s home. “The phone call is free, the patches are free, and the plan is free,” said Sullen. “No judgment. Just help.”

Callers will be asked to set a quit date within 30 days and work with a coach to make a plan. Studies show the combination of coaching and medication increases the chances of being successful. “Using these together is more effective than using one alone,” Sullen said.

Tobacco use is the leading cause of preventable death in the U.S. In Alabama; some 8,600 people die annually from tobacco use. Almost one-third of cancer deaths in Alabama are attributable to smoking, according to the Campaign for Tobacco Free Kids.

According to the 2016 Adult Tobacco Survey, conducted by the Institute for Social Science Research at the University of Alabama, more than 60 percent of Alabamians who smoke said they tried to quit at least once during the past year. “There are now more people who have quit smoking than there are current smokers,” Sullen said. For more information on quitting, contact the Quitline at 1-800-784-8669.

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