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- *Eighty-six (86) percent of Black tobacco users in NYS smoke menthol cigarettes*
- *NYS Black tobacco users are most likely to make quit attempts*
- *The NYS Smokers' Quitline offers individualized support for priority populations*

SUPPORT AVAILABLE FOR BLACK NEW YORK STATE RESIDENTS WHO USE TOBACCO PRODUCTS

In honor of Black History Month, the New York State Smokers' Quitline encourages Black tobacco users to take steps toward a healthier future

BUFFALO, N.Y. – Feb. 3, 2021 – With [86 percent](#) of Black tobacco users in New York State addicted to menthol cigarettes and the tobacco industry continuing to [heavily market](#) these products in urban neighborhoods, the odds appear stacked against the Black population to become tobacco-free. Fortunately, [most want to quit](#) and plenty of free resources are available, including individualized support through the New York State Smokers' Quitline (Quitline).

The Quitline encourages Black tobacco users to take charge of their health throughout Black History Month in February. Black New York State residents have a [higher prevalence of tobacco use](#) compared to other racial groups, and their preference of [menthol cigarettes presents an added challenge to quitting](#). Menthol masks the harshness of flavor, and users have a harder time quitting compared to those who smoke non-menthol tobacco products. There is hope for better health, however: among racial subsets in New York State, Black or African-American residents are the [most likely to make quit attempts](#).

Although the Quitline always recommends tobacco users consult a healthcare professional as part of a tobacco-free journey, it may be challenging to schedule in-person visits during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. The Quitline's Quit Coaches are available seven days a week beginning at 9 a.m. by calling 1-866-NY-QUITS (1-866-697-8487). All have taken extensive accredited tobacco treatment specialist training and incorporate motivational interviewing techniques to empower tobacco users to develop personalized quit plans.

The Quitline also has resources available online for Black New York State residents at <https://nysmokefree.com/bhm>. Visitors to the website will learn tips for quitting, such as the importance of setting a quit date, what questions to ask a healthcare professional and how to apply for free nicotine replacement therapy medication in the form of patches, gum and/or lozenges. In addition to visiting *nysmokefree.com*, the Quitline recommends Black New York State residents to learn more about Black community tobacco cessation issues through [The Center for Black Health & Equity](#).

The Quitline encourages everyone to write a new chapter of history this February during Black History Month. Quit Coaches are ready and eager to provide free support at 1-866-NY-QUITS (1-866-697-8487).

About the New York State Smokers' Quitline

The New York State Smokers' Quitline is a service of the New York State Department of Health and based at Roswell Park Comprehensive Cancer Center in Buffalo, N.Y. It is one of the first and busiest state quitlines in the nation and has responded to nearly 3 million calls since it began operating in 2000. The Quitline encourages nicotine users to talk with their healthcare professionals and access available Medicaid or health insurance benefits for stop-smoking medications. All New York State residents can call **1-866-NY-QUITS** (1-866-697-8487) for coaching and resources, free of charge, seven days a week beginning at 9 a.m. Visit www.nysmokefree.com for more information.

About Roswell Park Comprehensive Cancer Center

Roswell Park Comprehensive Cancer Center is a community united by the drive to eliminate cancer's grip on humanity by unlocking its secrets through personalized approaches and unleashing the healing power of hope. Founded by Dr. Roswell Park in 1898, it is the only National Cancer Institute-designated comprehensive cancer center in Upstate New York. Learn more at www.roswellpark.org, or contact us at 1-800-ROSWELL (1-800-767-9355) or ASKRoswell@roswellpark.org.