



NOTE TO MEDIA: Elizabeth Kapral, DDS, MS, is a member of the New York State Smokers' Quitline's Healthcare Professional Task Force and has extensive expertise on the vital role dental health professionals serve in helping their patients become tobacco-free. Please contact us to arrange an interview with Dr. Kapral via phone, Zoom or in-person near Buffalo, NY.

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Media Contact

Tony Astran, MPA, APR, TTS
New York State Smokers' Quitline
716-982-2088 (cell)
anthony.astran@roswellpark.org

- *Dental healthcare professionals can play a vital role in addressing tobacco use with their patients*
- *Prolonged tobacco use can result in oral cancers, periodontal disease and thrush*
- *The New York State Smokers' Quitline hosts a dental-themed webinar on October 7*

BAD BREATH AND STAINED TEETH: THE LEAST OF SMOKERS' ORAL HEALTH ISSUES

This October during Dental Hygiene Awareness Month, the NYS Smokers' Quitline highlights oral health and hosts a dental webinar on October 7

A popular adage explains that kissing someone who smokes is like licking an ashtray. Unfortunately for tobacco users, bad breath and stained teeth may be the least of their oral health issues. This October during Dental Hygiene Awareness Month, the New York State Smokers' Quitline (Quitline) highlights the oral health benefits of becoming tobacco-free and spotlights the vital role dental health professionals play in treating tobacco dependence.

The Quitline encourages dental health professionals to attend an upcoming dental-themed webinar on Thursday, October 7 at noon, titled, "Tobacco Cessation Lessons in the Dental Setting: Perspectives from Motivating Dental Patients to Quit." Registration is free at the

Quitline's Online News Room by visiting <https://nysmokefree.com/newsroom>; live participants can receive continuing dental education credit. The webinar's moderator – Elizabeth Kapral, DDS, MS, director of special needs dentistry at Erie County Medical Center in Buffalo, NY – is a member of the Quitline's Healthcare Professional Task Force. She explains what dentists like herself experience when encountering tobacco-using patients.

“Dental health professionals are on the front line of seeing changes to the mouth due to oral cancers, periodontal disease, and thrush,” Dr. Kapral said. “Becoming tobacco-free improves cancer prognoses and also makes it easier to heal from surgeries. For any type of dental health professional, even conveying a concise message like ‘quitting smoking is the best thing you can do for your dental health and your overall health’ can be so impactful for patients.”

Dr. Kapral also said dental health professionals may see patients twice a year or more, which provides increased opportunities to promote the benefits of becoming tobacco-free. “It’s important to refer tobacco-using patients and to get information about the Quitline in their hands,” she explains. “For example, a great opportunity to remind them about the Quitline’s helpful services is right after a dental extraction, as they cannot smoke for several days.”

For further information about the effects of tobacco use on oral health, the Quitline encourages the public to view the stories of Brett P. and Felicita R. from the CDC’s [Tips from Former Smokers](#) campaign. Each suffered gum disease and tooth loss due to continued tobacco usage.

In addition to first talking with a healthcare professional, the Quitline reminds tobacco users to take charge of their health by calling 1-866-NY-QUITS (1-866-697-8487) or visiting nysmokefree.com. Highly trained Quit Coaches are available seven days a week beginning at 9 a.m. to empower tobacco users through free, individualized coaching. Most New York State residents ages 18 and older also will qualify to receive a free starter supply of stop-smoking medication, such as nicotine patches, nicotine gum or nicotine lozenges.

The Quitline thanks dental health professionals for their support in treating tobacco-dependent patients. This National Dental Hygiene Month, each day living as tobacco-free is a reason to smile!

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.

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