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QUITLINE TO NEW YORK TOBACCO USERS: BE KIND TO YOUR HEART IN FEBRUARY

Delay or completely stop smoking or vaping during American Heart Month

BUFFALO, N.Y. – Feb. 3, 2020 – February is **American Heart Month**, and the New York State Smokers' Quitline (Quitline) recommends all tobacco and vape users to be kind to their heart. This means working to delay smoking or vaping, and eventually becoming tobacco-free. Coaches at the Quitline can help all ages with treating nicotine dependence, seven days a week, for no charge.

According to the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute, the chemicals in tobacco smoke harm one's heart and blood vessels in [many ways](#), including:

- Buildup of plaque in the arteries, which can lead to a heart attack.
- An increase of blood pressure and heart rate, making the heart work harder than normal.
- Blood thickening, which makes it harder to carry oxygen throughout the body.

Fortunately, the benefits of delaying and eventually stopping smoking are plentiful for the heart. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, some of the [rewards](#) for healthier choices include:

- A return-to-normal heart rate just 20 minutes after smoking.
- A lowered risk of heart attack after as little as two weeks without tobacco.
- The risk of coronary heart disease becoming one-half that of a smoker's just one year after becoming tobacco-free.

The Quitline recommends taking small steps in the journey to delay the use of nicotine and eventually stop for good. This February, tobacco users can start by doing three things to improve their heart health:

- 1.) **Schedule a yearly checkup with a healthcare professional** and discuss the impact of tobacco and nicotine on your body's health. Ask about a prescription for nicotine replacement therapy during the visit.
- 2.) **Call the Quitline at 1-866-NY-QUITS** (1-866-697-8487) and speak with a Quit Coach to develop a quit-plan and discuss smoking triggers.
- 3.) **Explore alternatives to cigarettes and e-cigarettes** for your daily usage. Consider using cinnamon sticks and hard candies to help overcome a craving for nicotine.

For additional resources on help with nicotine dependence, including local cessation classes throughout New York State, please visit the Quitline's website at www.nysmokefree.com. In addition, a downloadable toolkit to promote American Heart Month is available at www.healthfinder.gov.

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.