



Mendocino County Health & Human Services Agency

Healthy People, Healthy Communities

Tammy Moss Chandler, Director

Barbara Howe, Public Health Director

Press Release

Not for op-ed

Date: November 8, 2018

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Ashley Toxqui

Phone: 707-463-7905

Email: toxquia@mendocinocounty.org

The Great American Smokeout— November 15, 2018

The Mendocino County Public Health Department is encouraging the community to commit or recommit to healthy, smoke-free lives by participating in the American Cancer Society's 43rd Annual Great American Smokeout event on November 15, 2018.

"The most important thing smokers can do to improve their health is to quit smoking cigarettes and other forms of combustible tobacco," says Mark Fierro of the Mendocino County Tobacco Prevention Coalition. "We are showing our support for people who take those first steps towards making a plan to quit."

Cigarette smoking is the leading cause of cancer death in the United States, accounting for 29 percent of all cancer deaths. In fact, **smoking cigarettes kills more Americans than alcohol, car accidents, HIV, guns, and illegal drugs do combined.** Smoking not only causes cancer, but it also damages nearly every organ in the body, including the lungs, heart, blood vessels, reproductive organs, mouth, skin, eyes, and bones.

Addiction to the nicotine in cigarettes is one of the strongest and most deadly addictions one can have. Each year, approximately 20 million American smokers try to quit, representing more than half of the 37.8 million smokers in the U.S. Only 7 percent succeed. An even greater percentage of smokers (68 percent) report being interested in quitting.

Quitting is hard. It takes commitment, and starts with a plan. Getting help through counseling and/or prescription medications can triple your chances of quitting successfully. Support is also essential. Smoking cessation programs, like the California Smokers Helpline(1-800-NO-BUTTS), the American Cancer Society's Freshstart program, Nicotine Anonymous meetings, self-help materials such as books and pamphlets, and smoking counselors or coaches can be of great help.

The Mendocino County Tobacco Prevention Coalition is partnering with the American Cancer Society, which is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, to provide support as you make your plan to quit. More information is available at cancer.org/Smokeout or by calling 1-800-227-2345. For more information about the Mendocino County Tobacco Prevention Coalition, contact Mark Fierro at (707) 472 2695, or email fierrom@mendocinocounty.org.

#