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History of the Great American Smokeout Event

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What is the Great American Smokeout?

For almost 50 years, the American Cancer Society has hosted the Great American Smokeout on the third Thursday of November. The Great American Smokeout is an opportunity for people who smoke to commit to healthy, smoke-free lives – not just for a day, but year round.

The Great American Smokeout provides an opportunity for individuals, community groups, businesses, health care providers, and others to encourage people to use the date to make a plan to quit, or plan in advance and initiate a smoking cessation plan on the day of the event.

The Great American Smokeout event challenges people to stop smoking and helps people learn about the many tools they can use to help them quit and stay quit.

It's hard to quit tobacco

Nicotine is the addictive substance in tobacco. It's one of the strongest and most deadly addictions a person can have. This is why quitting is hard for many people who smoke. It takes a decision and commitment. Quitting starts with a plan and often takes more than one quit attempt, and requires a lot of support. Often, the younger you were when

you started to smoke, the more intense the addiction.

People who smoke are strongly advised to use proven cessation methods, such as prescription medications, counseling, and programs that support quitting. It's a good idea to talk to a doctor or pharmacist to get their advice.

Research shows that people who smoke are most successful in their efforts to stop smoking when they have support, such as:

- Telephone quitlines
- American Cancer Society's [Empowered to Quit](#)¹ email-based tobacco cessation program
- Nicotine Anonymous meetings
- Self-help books and materials
- Smoking counselors or coaches
- Encouragement and support from friends and family members

Using 2 or more of these measures to quit smoking works better than using any one of them alone. For example, some people use a [prescription medicine](#)² along with [nicotine replacement](#)³. Other people may use as many as 3 or 4 of the methods listed above. Professional guidance can help you choose the approach that's right for you.

The American Cancer Society can help

Quitting may not be easy, but you can do it and the American Cancer Society can help.

The American Cancer Society is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Call 1-800-227-2345 for help.

scholarship fund.

Then in 1974, Lynn R. Smith, editor of the *Monticello Times* in Minnesota, spearheaded the state's first D-Day, or Don't Smoke Day.

The idea caught on, and on November 18, 1976, the California Division of the American

Hyperlinks

1. www.cancer.org/cancer/risk-prevention/tobacco/empowered-to-quit.html
2. www.cancer.org/cancer/risk-prevention/tobacco/guide-quitting-smoking/prescription-drugs-to-help-you-quit-smoking.html
3. www.cancer.org/cancer/risk-prevention/tobacco/guide-quitting-smoking/nicotine-replacement-therapy.html

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