

HART HEALTHY TIPS: THE GREAT AMERICAN SMOKEOUT

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Save the date Thursday, November 16th! [The American Cancer Society](#) holds a very important event that day, which can be the first day towards quitting smoking for many people.

It's [The Great American Smokeout!](#)

[According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#), approximately 36.5 million Americans (15.1% of all adults) smoke cigarettes. Smoking causes several life-threatening diseases such as cancer, stroke, lung and heart diseases, diabetes, emphysema, and chronic bronchitis. Over 16 million Americans have diseases caused by smoking. In the United States alone, cigarette smoking causes more than 480,000 deaths per year. The financial costs of smoking are significant with a \$300 billion price tag in the United States, and direct medical costs of over \$170 billion. Despite these costs, quitting can be difficult.

Many smokers want to quit, but don't know where to start.

[According to a government study](#) nearly 70% of adult smokers want to quit, but only 6 % could stop smoking. Withdrawal symptoms such as irritability, anxiety, having trouble focusing, feeling angry, cravings for tobacco products, and weight gain can make it hard to stick to a plan. If a smoker can make it through these symptoms, the health implications are significant.



*2015 Centers For Disease Control and Prevention

[Health benefits](#) begin within 20 minutes of quitting by lowering heart rate and blood pressure. After 1 year the risk of coronary heart disease is cut in half and after 5 years the risk of stroke is reduced to that of a nonsmoker. The risk of coronary heart disease returns to that of a nonsmoker 15 years after quitting. The sooner a person quits the better, too. Quitting at age 30 can add approximately 10 years of life expectancy compared to waiting until age 60 to quit, which only adds 3 years. A good plan can help reach goals of quitting.

The Great American Smokeout event is dedicated to increasing awareness of the importance of quitting and urges smokers to not only to quit for the day, but to make a [plan to quit for good](#).

Steps to a good plan for quitting:

- Make the decision to quit

- Pick a quit date and mark it on the calendar
- Inform friends and family for support
- Purge all cigarettes
- Practice saying, “No thank you, I don’t smoke.”
- Review support options such as nicotine replacement therapy, prescription drugs, support programs, acupuncture, herbal supplements, and mind-body practices

After Stopping	Benefits Seen
Less than 30 mins	Pulse rate, blood pressure returns to normal
8 hours	Carbon monoxide level in blood returns to normal
24 hours	Risk of heart attack decreases
72 hours	Breathing becomes easier
3 months	Sperm count returns to normal
1 year	Risk of heart attack reduces by half
5 years	Stroke risk reduces
10 years	Risk of heart attack becomes the same as that of non-smokers and risk of cancers decreases

On your quit day, be sure to not smoke at all. Staying busy will help keep urges away. Be sure to drink plenty of water, start any nicotine replacement therapy chosen, and avoid situations where smoking is prevalent. If the urge to smoke arises, use the [4 D's](#) to help fight the urge: delay, deep breathe, drink water, and do something else.

So, take the challenge to invite a smoker in your life to the save the date, Thursday, November 16th, the first day to life without smoking.

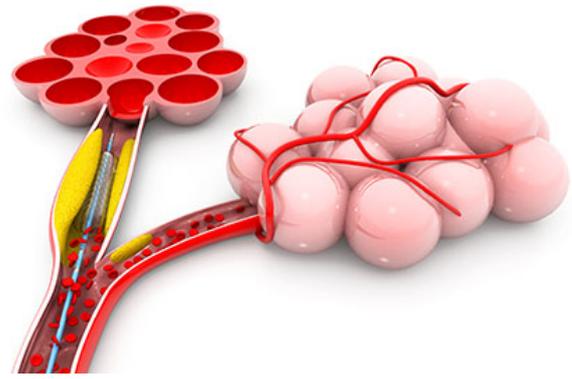
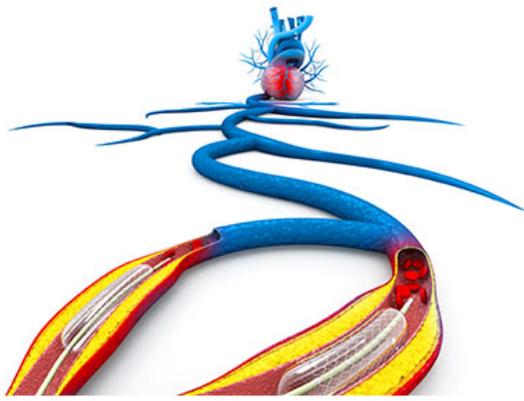
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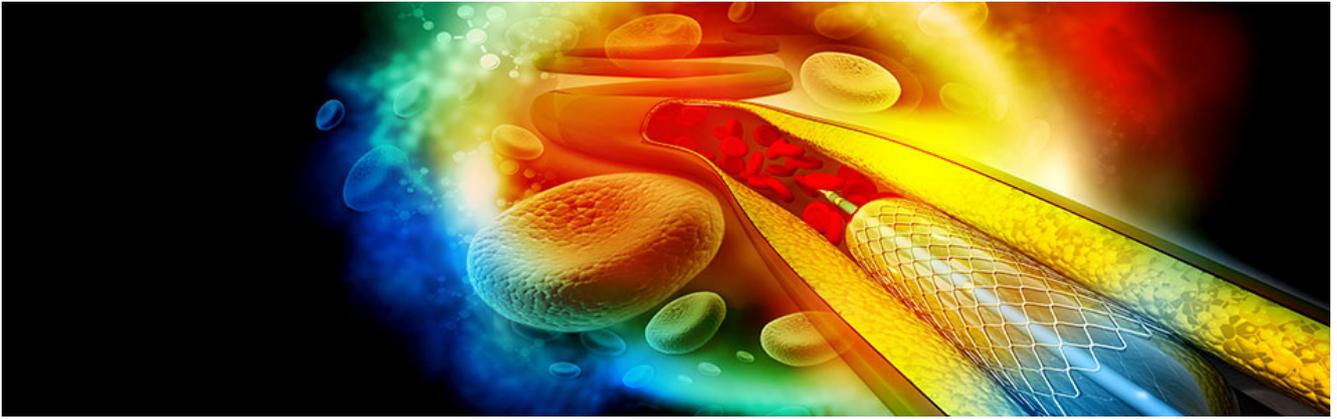
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