MARION COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT
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Great American Smoke Out Nov. 19

MCPHD offers suggestions to those wanting to quit

INDIANAPOLIS – Like many habits, quitting smoking can be tough.

The American Cancer Society's annual Great American Smokeout campaign – which occurs on Nov. 19 this year -- asks smokers to consider taking a step or two towards quitting.

"We know from the data – quitting anything abruptly or without support is hard," said Josephine Williams, a Smoking Cessation Specialist with the Marion County Public Health Department's Chronic Disease Department. "But maybe a person could stop for a day, or could start to reduce their tobacco use. Something to make the idea of quitting seem less daunting."

Despite some public health wins in recent years, tobacco use continues to be the leading cause of preventable death and disease in the United States.

Efforts of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the Indiana Department of Health, MCPHD, and partners have reduced smoking rates, especially among youth.

However, our most recent data review shows the percentage of current smokers in Marion County was 16.1%, compared to 10.8% for the United States and 18.2% for Indiana. Also, e-cigarette use is also higher in Marion County (8.6%) than in the United States (7%) and in Indiana (7.8%).

Andi Cox, MCPHD's Tobacco Program Coordinator, said the annual Great American Smokeout takes place on the third Thursday of November each year. It is a time when the weather is colder and there is less sunlight, when family gatherings are held, and when people start thinking about changes they could make in the new year.

"This can be a stressful season for some," Cox said. "It is an important time to take care of your body, and reducing smoking or vaping can decrease your health risks, and help you feel better."

The Quit Now Indiana program – available at https://www.quitnowindiana.com/ -- offers a variety of services to tobacco users. People can talk with counselors, communicate by text messages, and can receive free nicotine replacement therapies. People can also talk with their local pharmacist about medications that might help.

Quitting cold turkey is a valid way to quit but is not easy. Combining counseling and medication gives people the greatest chance to quit and stay quit.

For more information about local smoking-cessation resources, please contact Williams at JosWilliams@MarionHealth.org, or the Quitline at 1-800-784-8669.

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