



What's new with the Great American Smokeout? **STAY QUIT MONDAY**

New York City (November 17, 2008) - - Quitting is hard and staying quit is even harder.

On Thursday, November 20, the countless Americans who want to quit smoking in the American Cancer Society's 33rd Great American Smokeout will have an easier time to stay quit with the new Stay Quit Monday initiative. The idea is to reaffirm their Smokeout commitment to living smoke-free on the Monday following their quit date and recommitting each Monday thereafter.

"Studies show a high relapse rate for most first-time quitters and it takes multiple attempts for most smokers to quit for good" says Frances Stillman, Co-Director of the Institute for Global Tobacco Control at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health. "The idea of using each Monday as the day for quitters to reaffirm their smoke cessation goal is a sensible way to stay on track, from Monday to Monday, instead of from 'today to never again.'"

Donald Distasio, Chief Executive Officer of the American Cancer Society, Eastern Division says, "We hope many more smokers will use the Great American Smokeout as an important first step towards living a smoke-free life. Stay Quit Monday is a good tool for smokers to use in reinforcing their commitment to quitting. If you're looking to quit smoking, call your American Cancer Society at 1-800-ACS-2345 or visit www.cancer.org. We can help."

A report last year from the Institute of Medicine says that "motivating more quit attempts among people who now make none, and more frequent quit attempts among those who now try to quit" is one of five requirements for achieving higher cessation rates.¹ The American Legacy Foundation, a leading provider of smoke cessation resources, says, "Smokers should not pin all their hopes and aspirations on one day to be a successful quitter. Instead of waiting for the start of the New Year to roll around, the start of each week can signal a new beginning and be a chance to renew your commitment to quit smoking."²

"Stay Quit Monday builds in an opportunity every week to commit to quit smoking and to celebrate the progress people are making towards this goal," says Peggy Neu, President of Healthy Monday. "We believe that no matter what day a smoker quits - Smokeout Day, New Years or birthdays - recommitting to that resolution every Monday thereafter can do a lot to increase the chance for success." The Stay Quit Monday campaign is a Healthy Monday project of Columbia University Mailman School of Public Health, Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health and Syracuse University Newhouse School of Public Communications.

Smoking causes more than 15 different types of cancers, cardiovascular disease and stroke. To learn more about how to quit smoking and to prepare to begin a smoke-free life contact the American Cancer Society's Quitline at 1-800-ACS-2345 or visit www.cancer.org. And for more resources on quitting smoking and staying quit, visit the Stay Quit Monday page on the Healthy Monday website at www.HealthyMonday.org/stayquit.

¹ Institute of Medicine. 2007. *Ending the Tobacco Problem: A Blueprint for the Nation*. Washington, DC: The National Academies Press.

² American Legacy Foundation. "Healthy Monday, A New Approach to Quitting Smoking." Press Release. 21 Sept. 2006. 7 Nov. 2006 <http://www.americanlegacy.org/449.aspx>