



HEALTH SERVICES AGENCY

830 Scenic Drive, P.O. Box 3271, Modesto, CA 95353
Fax: (209)558-8320
www.hsahealth.org

NUMBER: 18-11
FOR RELEASE: IMMEDIATE

DATE: 11/16/18
CONTACT: Barbara Vassell
PHONE: 209.558.6833

THE GREAT AMERICAN SMOKEOUT®

In recognition of the Great American Smokeout®, Stanislaus County Health Services Agency's Public Health Division encourages all tobacco users to think about and plan to quit smoking. Whether you smoke cigarettes, cigars, e-cigarettes or use any other tobacco products, this is the perfect time to decide to quit tobacco use altogether, or for one day at a time.

The Great American Smokeout® has been encouraging smokers to stop smoking for over 42 years. Smoking is still the single largest preventable cause of disease, disability, and premature death in the United States. Here are some quick facts:

- Tobacco use accounts for 29% of all cancer deaths
- Over 440,000 Americans die from smoking or exposure to secondhand smoke each year
- More than 8 million Americans are living with a serious illness caused by smoking

While cigarette smoking rates have dropped, about **37.8 million Americans still smoke cigarettes**. The increasing popularity of electronic smoking devices (ESDs) such as JUUL (a USB like device popular amongst youth) and other vaping products with over 15,500 flavors on the market targeting youth, are creating a new market for tobacco addiction. "The most important thing smokers can do to improve their health is to quit smoking," said Dr. Julie Vaishampayan, Stanislaus County Public Health Officer."

Quitting is hard. Most smokers make 6-7 quit attempts before their final cigarette. Getting help through counseling and/or prescription medications increases your chances of ongoing success. The following smoking cessation programs can provide support during your journey to a smoke-free life:

- [California Smokers Helpline \(1-800-NoButts\)](#)
- [American Cancer Society's Materials and Quit Plans](#)
- [SmokeFree.gov](#)

These programs can provide self-help materials such as books or pamphlets, and smoking counselors or coaches. Your medical insurance, including Medi-Cal and Affordable Care Act insurance providers, also cover medications like nicotine patches and gum. Follow up with your provider to get additional information.

"Stanislaus County Public Health wants to support the people in our community in living healthier and happier," said Dr. Vaishampayan. "During this year's Great American Smokeout® we hope everyone joins us – and encourages their friends, family, and colleagues to join us – in committing or recommitting to smoke-free lives."