



NEWS RELEASE

ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

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Make 2016 the year to quit tobacco

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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It's a promise people make every year. But like a lot of New Year's resolutions, quitting tobacco can be a hard commitment to keep.

The Alabama Department of Public Health can help through the Tobacco Quitline. The Quitline helps callers develop an individualized quit plan, and offers coaching and up to eight weeks of nicotine replacement therapy (NRT) patches, if the caller is medically eligible and enrolled in the coaching program.

All services at the Quitline – 1-800-QUIT-NOW – are free to Alabama residents. Services are available every day from 6 a.m. to midnight, with calls placed after these hours or on holidays returned the next business day. Quitline services are also available online at QuitNowAlabama.com.

Calling 1-800-784-8669 from any Alabama area code connects to the Quitline. The Quitline will schedule phone coaching sessions at convenient times for the caller. If the caller is eligible for NRT, it is mailed directly to the caller's home.

"No judgment, just free help," said Quitline Manager Jabari Sullen. "The phone call is free, the patches are free, and the plan is free."

Callers will be asked to set a quit date within 30 days and work with a coach to make a plan. Because tobacco use is often a combination of a chemical addiction and behavioral habit, the program requires coaching with the distribution of the NRT patch. Studies show the combination of coaching and medication increases the chances of being successful.

"The benefits of quitting smoking are almost immediate," said Sullen. "Your heart rate and blood pressure drop within an hour and your circulation improves in a matter of weeks. Think how much money you may have for other things when you're not buying cigarettes or other tobacco products." Sullen said most people who call the Quitline are smokers, but the program can help users quit other forms of tobacco as well.

According to the 2013 Adult Tobacco Survey, more than 54 percent of Alabamians who smoke said they tried to quit at least once during the past year. There are now more people who have quit smoking than there are current smokers, Sullen said.

For more information on quitting, contact the Quitline at 1-800-784-8669.

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