Smoking Cessation

“Habit, if not resisted, soon becomes necessity.”
~ St. Augustine

Approximately 46 million people in the United States smoke cigarettes. Smoking is the leading cause of preventable deaths, accounting for about 1 in 5 deaths in the U.S. every year. The key word here is preventable – think prevention!

Health Benefits of Quitting Smoking

Some health benefits of quitting smoking are immediate:

- Heart rate and blood pressure, which are abnormally high while smoking, begin to return to normal.
- Within a few hours, the level of carbon monoxide in the blood begins to decline. (Carbon monoxide reduces the blood's ability to carry oxygen.)
- Within a few weeks, people who quit smoking have improved circulation, produce less phlegm, and don't cough or wheeze as often.
- Within several months of quitting, people can expect substantial improvements in lung function
- In addition, people who quit smoking will have an improved sense of smell, and food will taste better.

Long term health benefits of quitting smoking:

Quitting smoking reduces the risk of cancer and other diseases, such as heart disease and COPD:

- **Quitting at age 30:** Studies have shown that smokers who quit at about age 30 reduce their chance of dying prematurely from smoking-related diseases by more than 90 percent.
- **Quitting at age 50:** People who quit at about age 50 reduce their risk of dying prematurely by 50 percent compared with those who continue to smoke.
- **Quitting at age 60:** Even people who quit at about age 60 or older live longer than those who continue to smoke.
Make the Decision Today!

If you are a regular smoker and want to stop smoking, contact your Safety or HR Manager for additional resources. They can direct you to get the professional help you need to quit smoking!

Additional Resources:

- www.smokefree.gov
- 1-800-QUIT-NOW

Sources: CDC, cancer.gov

Tips for changing bad health habits:

- Seek professional help if you think you have an addiction.
- Recognize the truth. Awareness is the first step to breaking a bad habit.
- After you make a decision to change, your direction is set. Make the decision.
- Make a commitment to do whatever it takes to let go of your old behavior and to introduce new behaviors that serve you better.
- Connect with an accountability partner or group to help you.
- As you take daily actions toward your new habit, remember that consistency is critical. Taking only occasional action will not work.
- Never give up!