



live well, work well

November 2011

Brought to you by: Alamo Insurance Group

The Time is Now: Quit Smoking for Good!

Lung cancer is the leading cause of cancer death in the United States, and represents one in every three cancer deaths, according to the Lung Cancer Alliance. November is Lung Cancer Awareness Month, making it a perfect time to shine a spotlight on the risk factor that causes about 87 percent of lung cancer cases: smoking cigarettes.

After you quit smoking, your body experiences positive changes within hours. Body function improves and health risks continue to decrease for several years. Ten years after quitting, your risk of dying from lung cancer is half that of a current smoker.

If the medical reasons aren't enough motivation to quit, think of all the money you'll save. A pack-a-day smoker could save over \$200 a month – imagine all the ways you could spend that money.

And don't forget to consider your loved ones. If you smoke in your home or car, you are endangering your family, friends and pets. Secondhand smoke can cause a variety of health conditions and diseases, and causes thousands of deaths each year in nonsmokers.

Ready to quit? Nov. 17 is the Great American Smokeout, a day when smokers around the country quit



smoking together. This year, take the steps you need to stop smoking for good!

Start planning now. Mark the date on your calendar and tell family and friends of your plan to make sure you follow through. Tell your doctor about your plan to quit and consider using a prescription quit aid.

Prepare for the challenges you will face after quitting. You may need to change your routine or activities to avoid situations that worsen your cravings. Make a list of times you may feel tempted to smoke, and come up with coping methods. For instance, you may want to keep gum or healthy snacks handy to occupy your mouth.

For additional advice and support, visit www.cancer.org/Healthy/StayAwayfromTobacco/GuidetoQuittingSmoking/index.

Banish Back Pain

Feeling pain or soreness in your back? These tips can help you reduce your pain and prevent it in the future:

- When lifting, bend your knees, not your waist.
- Invest in a good mattress – it can make a world of difference in your pain level and your sleep quality.
- Sit up straight! Good posture reduces the strain on your back.
- Strive to reduce your stress level. Stress can increase tension in your body and cause back pain.
- Always warm up before doing a physical activity.

DID YOU KNOW?

Improving your physical fitness is one of the best things to do for a sore back. Maintaining a healthy weight, improving flexibility and strengthening back, abdominal and leg muscles can help reduce and prevent back pain. Exercising may be difficult with back pain, so ask your doctor what type of exercises and stretches would be best for you.



Eating Out? You Can Still Eat Healthy

Hectic schedules mean that convenience often trumps nutrition when it comes to meals. But if you choose wisely, eating out doesn't have to bust your diet. Whether you're grabbing fast food or sitting down at a restaurant, remember these tips:

- Choose water to drink instead of soda, juice or alcohol.
- Order your food without dressing or sauces, such as mayo, cheese and sour cream. Or, ask for the dressing on the side and use just a little.
- Watch out for words like deep-fried, pan-fried, batter-dipped, breaded, creamy, crispy and au gratin – these dishes tend to have more calories.
- Choose leaner meats, such as chicken or turkey instead of beef. Substitute a side salad for fries, or ask for vegetables instead of potatoes. Opt for whole wheat for bread or pasta.



- Split a dinner portion with someone or ask the server to wrap up half of your meal right away – so you aren't tempted to consume the giant portion served to you.
- Don't add salt – restaurant food tends to already be high in sodium, especially fast food.

Is Your Family Protected?



It's not pleasant to think about, but if you died unexpectedly, could your family cope financially without your income? Life insurance protects your loved ones in the event of your untimely death, but many people don't realize its true value. Ask yourself:

- Are you the primary household income?
- Do you have a mortgage, college loans or other debt?
- How would your family support themselves if you died?
- Could you (or your family) afford tens of thousands of dollars in medical bills and/or funeral costs?
- Who would have the burden of paying any debt or other financial responsibilities that you leave behind?
- If you do have a policy, does it pay out enough to cover all of these financial responsibilities for your loved ones?

Whether you are young and single, middle-aged with a family or nearing retirement, having adequate life insurance is vital. Speak with a financial adviser about your needs and coverage options. You may think you can't afford another monthly premium, but can your family afford it if you don't?

Vinaigrette Salad Dressing

Salad is a healthy choice, but most dressings are loaded with calories – try this delicious dressing as a light alternative.

- 1 bulb garlic, separated and peeled
- ½ cup water
- 1 tbsp. red wine vinegar
- ¼ tsp. honey
- 1 tbsp. virgin olive oil
- ¼ tsp. black pepper

Place the garlic cloves in a small saucepan and pour water to cover them. Bring water to a boil, then reduce heat and simmer until garlic is tender (about 15 minutes). Reduce the liquid to two tablespoons and increase the heat for three minutes. Pour the contents into a small sieve over a bowl, and with a wooden spoon mash the garlic through the sieve into the bowl. Whisk the vinegar into the garlic mixture; incorporate the oil, honey and pepper. Yields 4 servings at 33 calories per serving.

Source: *National Heart, Lung & Blood Institute*

