

*Quit Smoking...for Life!*

According to a recent Minnesota Adult Tobacco Survey, more than half of Minnesota's smokers are trying to quit. Recent smoke-free laws and workplace policies have led many to drop the habit. Quitting smoking has many immediate and long-term health benefits; not to mention the economic impact it can have on an individual's budget. Quitting smoking can also affect a person's family and friends by reducing their amount of second-hand smoke exposure. It can also improve an individual's personal appearance and self-esteem.

Studies have shown that just 20 minutes after quitting, a person's heart rate drops to a normal level. Twelve hours after quitting the carbon monoxide level in ones blood drops to normal. In just two weeks to three months after quitting, lung function begins to improve and heart attack risks begin to drop. In fact, one year after quitting a person's added risk of coronary heart disease is half of that of a smoker's.

But successfully quitting smoking is a complex and often difficult process that may involve several attempts.

Healthcare providers can have a positive impact in helping patients quit. Sometimes they can prescribe medications or recommend nicotine replacement therapies to help individuals quit. Others can benefit from professional counseling. Several programs also exist that can help individuals quit, including the American Lung Association's Freedom from Smoking program. This 7-week program is a proven method for quitting, based on the premise that smoking is a learned activity. Program facilitators have been trained by the American Lung Association. Class sizes are small, providing a supportive environment where an individual can share their struggles and successes with others who understand what they are going through.

A few of the key issues addressed in the Freedom from Smoking program include stress management, nicotine withdrawal, weight control, and long-term strategies for staying smoke-free.

Lakeview Hospital and the Lakeview Foundation, in partnership with Minnesota's Statewide Health Improvement Program (SHIP)\*, will offer the Freedom from Smoking program\*\* beginning in October. The group will meet eight times, between October 5 and November 16, at the hospital. Participants will learn how to overcome their tobacco addiction so they can start to enjoy the benefits of better health. For more information on the program at Lakeview, or to register, please call (651) 430-4655.

**Lakeview Hospital's Cardiac and Pulmonary Rehabilitation** department provides education and exercise training that stresses proper care and symptom management for the patient on an outpatient basis.



\*The Statewide Health Improvement Program (SHIP), an integral part of Minnesota's nation-leading 2008 health reform law, strives to help Minnesotans lead longer, healthier lives by preventing the chronic disease risk factors of tobacco use and exposure, poor nutrition and physical inactivity. For more information, visit <http://www.health.state.mn.us/healthreform/ship>.

\*\*This training was made possible through funding from the Statewide Health Improvement Program (SHIP) of the Minnesota Department of Health.