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Health News

Event to help people quit smoking

By Sarah Skidmore
 Oregon Daily Emerald

Within 20 minutes of quitting smoking, the human body will begin to heal itself. But the first step is one day without cigarettes, according to the American Cancer Society.

This Thursday is the 21st Great American Smokeout. The American Cancer Society encourages all smokers to give up the habit for this one day every year. The slogan for this year is, "If you can quit for one day, you can quit for good."

According to the Cancer Society, approximately 17 million people try to quit for this day. Of those who try, more than 4 million still aren't smoking after three months.

Smoking-related diseases kill more than 400,000 Americans every year. This total is higher than the deaths from AIDS, alcohol, car accidents, fires, illegal drugs, murders and suicides combined.

Despite known health risks and cost, 48 million adults in the United States still smoke, according to the National Health Interview Survey.

Quitting smoking isn't easy, said Jolene Siemsen, a nurse practitioner at the University Student Health Center who specializes in smoking cessation.

Smoking is a short- and long-term health risk for college students. According to the Centers for Disease Control, 27.5 percent of all the adult smokers in the country are within the age group of 18-24.

Short-term effects include premature wrinkling, bad breath, clothes and hair that smell of smoke, and yellowed nails and teeth.

Long-term effects include increased risk of emphysema, chronic bronchitis and chronic obstruc-

Benefits of quitting

AFTER 20 MINUTES: Blood pressure drops close to level it was before the last cigarette.

8 HOURS: Levels of carbon monoxide in the blood drop to normal.

24 HOURS: Chances of heart attacks decrease.

2 WEEKS TO 3 MONTHS: Circulation improves, lung function increases to 30 percent.

1 TO 9 MONTHS: Coughing, sinus congestion, fatigue and shortness of breath decrease. Cilia in the lungs regain their normal function.

1 YEAR: The excess risk of coronary heart disease is half that of a smoker.

5 YEARS: The risk of stroke is reduced to that of a non-smoker within five to 15 years of quitting.

10 YEARS: The rate of lung cancer death is about half of that of a continuing smoker. The risk of cancer of the mouth, throat, esophagus, bladder, kidney and pancreas decrease.

15 YEARS: The risk of coronary heart disease is equal to that of a non-smoker.

tive pulmonary disease. Additionally, smokers are twice as likely as nonsmokers to die of heart attacks and have an increased risk of peripheral vascular disease, according to the Cancer Society.

Women on birth control pills should be particularly wary of cigarettes, Siemsen said. Nicotine can constrict the flow in blood vessels, and the estrogen in birth control pills can increase the stickiness of red blood cells, which can put women at risk for blood clots.

"Women need to know it is not OK to be on birth control and smoke," she said.

There are many methods to help

smokers quit. Drug assistance and nicotine replacement programs such as patches, nasal spray or gum are some possibilities, but quitting without drug assistance is also an option. Quitting cold turkey and phasing out cigarettes are two choices.

The Cancer Society recommends the following steps in preparation for quitting: pick the date for quitting, and mark it on your calendar; tell friends and family about quitting; stock up on gum or snacks; decide on a plan for quitting; practice saying "No thank you; I don't smoke"; and set up a support system.

"I advise people not to think of it as deprivation," Siemsen said.

She recommends collecting money previously used for cigarettes and spending it on something indulgent, such as a vacation or nice dinner. Additionally, she suggests beginning an exercise program to enhance a positive self-image and increase health.

Staying off cigarettes can be quite a challenge. The availability of cigarettes and the social support associated with them add to the addiction, Siemsen said.

Many people who have smoked for long periods of time naturally associate everyday activities with cigarettes, Siemsen said.

"When they try to quit, all those behaviors have to be unwound from those activities," she said.

In honor of the Great American Smokeout, the health center is sponsoring a fun run next week around campus, offering acupuncture to help smoking cessation and providing information to students. Cessation workshops are held year-round through the health education program.

Rubberneck



Produced By UO Cultural Forum

**University of Oregon
 Cultural Forum**

- EMU Ballroom, on UO Campus
Saturday, November 21st.
 Doors open at 7:30 p.m., show starts at 8:00 and will go until 11:00.
- \$6 UO Students, \$8 general public. Tickets are available at EMU Ticket Office and at door.
- Tickets on sale Monday, November 16th. General Admission only.
- For More Information, contact Matt Radochonski, Cultural Forum 541-346-4376

Rubberneck,
 with special guest
The Action Figures

Oregon Daily Emerald

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