

HEALTH MATTERS

Graphic Warnings Due for Cigarettes

Images part of new regulations

(AP) -- Corpses, cancer patients and diseased lungs are among the images the federal government plans for larger, graphic warning labels that would take up half of each pack of cigarettes sold in the United States.

Whether smokers addicted to nicotine will see them as a reason to quit remains a question.

The images are part of a new campaign announced by the Food and Drug Administration and the Department of Health and Human



One of the proposed warning graphics that will appear on cigarette packaging as part of the government's new tobacco prevention efforts.

Services on Wednesday to reduce tobacco use, which is responsible for about 443,000 deaths per year.

"Some very explicit, almost gruesome pictures may be necessary," FDA Commissioner Margaret Hamburg said in an interview with The Associated Press. "This is a very, very serious public health issue, with very, very serious medical consequences," such as cancer, heart disease, strokes and lung diseases.

The share of Americans who smoke has fallen dramatically since 1970, from nearly 40 percent to about 20 percent, but the rate has stalled since about 2004. About 46 million adults in the U.S. smoke cigarettes.

In the same period, the average cost per pack has gone from 38 cents to \$5.33. Much of those increases are from state and federal taxes.

The new prevention plan is part of a law passed in June 2009 that gave the FDA authority to regulate tobacco, including setting guidelines for marketing and labeling, banning certain products

and limiting nicotine. The law doesn't The FDA is proposing 36 labels for public comment. They include phrases like "Smoking can kill you" and "Cigarettes cause cancer" and feature graphic images to convey the dangers of tobacco.

Some of the labels include a man with a tracheotomy smoking a cigarette, a cartoon of a mother blowing smoke in her baby's face, rotting and diseased teeth and gums, as well as cigarettes being flushed down the toilet to signify quitting.

The agency will select the final labels in June after reviews of scientific literature, public comments and results from an 18,000-person study. Cigarette makers will then have a year and three months to start using the new labels.

Zak Hoffman of Cincinnati, who has been smoking since he was 14.

"I think more tax increases would have more of an effect than scare tactics," said 20-year-old Gina Gatano, a student who works at a downtown Cincinnati coffee shop.

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Free Cervical Cancer Screenings

The OHSU Center for Women's Health offers free cervical cancer screenings for women who've encountered barriers to receiving a Pap test and pelvic exam. Typical barriers include lack of insurance or insurance that does not cover Pap tests.

The Free Screening Program at OHSU offers 25 free screening appointments each month on a first-come, first-served basis. Screenings are by appointment only; call 503

346-1212 to make an appointment or for more information.

"A Pap test can detect small changes in the cervix. Usually these small changes, or abnormal cells, are not cancerous but if left untreated some may develop into cervical cancer. Cervical screenings can identify changes in a woman's body even when there are no symptoms to warn when something is wrong," explained Dr. Michelle Berlin of the OHSU Center for Women's Health.

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\$20 value

"Where to go so you know"

Multnomah County Health Department's HIV Community Test Site offers **confidential** HIV testing with or without your name at these locations:

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Northeast Health Center
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Public Health
Multnomah County Health Department

Se habla español: other interpretation by appointment.

Visibility is Key to Road/Bike Safety

Riding a bike or walking are healthy and fun ways to get around, but dangerous situations can occur when motorists don't see bicyclists or pedestrians.

Unfortunately, not all people who share the road are conscious of their surroundings. Responsibility falls back onto each of us to help make traveling accident free.

Visibility is important for bicycle and pedestrian safety. Oregon transportation officials encourage bicyclists, pedestrians and motorists to "See, and Be Seen."

Pedestrians and bicyclists need to take steps to make sure motorists can see them, and motorists need to make sure they see bicyclists and pedestrians.