

## New 'Tips From Former Smokers' campaign begins

Written by Holyoke Enterprise

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The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has launched a national education campaign depicting the harsh reality of illness and damage real people suffer as a result of smoking and exposure to secondhand smoke.

The ads show the toll smoking-related illnesses take on real people and their loved ones. Viewers in Colorado will see the ads from March 19-June 4.

The "Tips from Former Smokers" campaign features compelling stories of former smokers living with smoking-related diseases and disabilities. The ads focus on smoking-related lung and throat cancer, heart attack, stroke, Buerger's disease and asthma. Smokers who quit also pass along tips about what helped them succeed.

"Though they may be tough to watch, the ads show real people living with real, painful consequences from smoking," said CDC director Dr. Thomas R. Frieden. "There is sound evidence that supports the use of these types of hard-hitting images and messages to encourage smokers to quit, keep children from ever beginning to smoke and drastically reduce the harm caused by tobacco."

Dr. Chris Urbina, executive director and chief medical officer of the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment, said, "We identified tobacco as one of Colorado's 10 Winnable Battles because it is the leading cause of preventable death in our state. This campaign educates the public on the serious and long-term dangers of smoking and secondhand smoke for individuals and their families."

Despite the known dangers of tobacco use, nearly one in five adults in the U.S. and one in six adults in Colorado smoke. Forty percent of Coloradans report unwanted exposure to secondhand smoke, and more than 30 percent of children are exposed to tobacco smoke at home.

More than 4,300 Coloradans each year lose their lives to smoking-related diseases, and for every one person who dies, another 20 live with a smoking-related illness. Still, nearly 70 percent of smokers say they want to quit, and half try to quit each year.

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Many of the ads are tagged with 1-800-QUIT-NOW, a toll-free number that directs callers to the Colorado QuitLine to access free support for quitting. The Colorado QuitLine is a free telephone coaching service that connects people who want to quit smoking to an experienced Quit Coach.

The Quit Coach works with the smoker to set up a personal quit plan and provides tips and support to increase the chances of quitting tobacco for the long term. Along with individualized coaching, the telephone service offers a free supply of nicotine patches.

The telephone coaching service is available seven days a week, in English and Spanish. Online quit support is also available at [www.smokefree.gov](http://www.smokefree.gov).

For more information on the “Tips from Former Smokers” campaign, visit [www.cdc.gov/quitting/tip](http://www.cdc.gov/quitting/tip) s.

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