

# The High Price Of Smoking

(NAPSA)—If you or someone you know is a smoker, you may have noticed that the cost of cigarettes continues to rise. The national tax on cigarettes is currently over a dollar a pack.

Most smokers have heard many of the health reasons to quit. After all, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), smoking is the leading preventable cause of disease and premature death in the U.S. Many people, however, may not have thought about the harm smoking does to their wallets.

The cost of cigarettes varies, but a person who smokes a pack a day can expect to save at least \$1,600 a year by quitting. The more you smoke, the more money you would save by quitting. By not buying cigarettes, a former pack-a-day smoker could buy:

- A portable DVD player in just two months (worth over \$250)
- A flat-screen TV in only six months (worth \$750)
- A four-day cruise for two in one year (worth over \$1,500).

No matter what your reason is for wanting to quit smoking, however, doing so can be hard. Seventy percent of smokers say they want to quit, according to the CDC, but only 3 to 5 percent who try to quit without treatment remain smoke-free for up to one year, a study published in the medical journal *Addiction* reports.

“If you’re thinking about quitting smoking, a great first step is to talk to your health care provider. There are options that can help you

Experts say there are immediate and long-term benefits to quitting smoking:

- Within 24 hours, blood pressure and heart rate may drop.
- In two to 12 weeks, circulation and lung function may improve.
- After one year, excess risk of heart disease drops to half that of a smoker.
- After 10 years, the risk of dying from lung cancer is half that of a continuing smoker.
- Plus, it’s estimated a smoker can save more than \$1,600 a year by quitting.



quit and give you support to stay smoke-free,” said Carol Southard, RN, MSN, Tobacco Treatment Specialist, Northwestern Memorial Hospital, Chicago, Ill. “Saving money is a good reason to quit, but above all, you’d be making a huge difference in your health.”

No matter how old you are or how long you’ve smoked, there are immediate and long-term benefits to quitting:

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To learn more, visit [www.mytimetoquit.com](http://www.mytimetoquit.com). This information is courtesy of Pfizer Inc.