



HEALTH AWARENESS

New Awareness Of The Importance Of Quitting

(NAPSA)—Sometimes a tragic event can have a positive effect, and that's certainly the case when the death of a prominent person inspires many people to try to improve their health.

That may be just what happens as the result of the untimely loss of ABC News anchor Peter Jennings, who lost his struggle with lung cancer in August.

Those who are diagnosed with lung cancer often are victims of an addiction to nicotine, and research shows more than 400,000 Americans die each year from tobacco-related diseases, including cancers, heart disease, emphysema and stroke. About 70 percent of smokers say they want to quit, but fewer than five percent succeed each year, because nicotine is so powerfully addictive. Quitting smoking is one of the most important steps that people can take to safeguard their health.

"We encourage smokers to talk with their doctors about lung cancer and other illnesses caused by smoking and to create personalized plans to help them quit," said Dr. Cheryl G. Heaton, president and CEO of the American Legacy Foundation®, a national public health foundation dedicated to educating people to reject tobacco and helping smokers quit.

Quitting smoking is hard work, but these tips from the American Legacy Foundation can increase a smoker's chances for success:

1. Choose to quit. Commit to quitting by setting a quit date and identifying your reasons for quitting.

2. Create a plan. Give yourself at least five days to get ready to quit. Your plan should include:

Medication: Talk to your doctor about medications—both over the counter and prescription—such as



Talk to your doctor about medications as part of your personal quit plan.

lozenges, the patch and gum, and pills you can take—that can help you deal with nicotine cravings and other uncomfortable feelings when quitting to boost your chances of quitting successfully.

Professional counseling: Find a professional who can help you know what to expect and how to handle tough situations. Use quit-smoking clinics and group meetings in your community. Take advantage of telephone counseling. You can call 1-800-QUIT-NOW anywhere in the country. If you live in Washington, D.C. or Maryland, as opposed to other areas, call the Legacy Learn to Quit Line at 1-888-399-5589 to speak with a quit coach.

Social support: Tell your family, friends and co-workers about your plan to quit, so they can help you through tough times. When going out, consider visiting smoke-free environments.

3. Keep trying. Quitting is hard work. Former smokers report trying to quit many times before being successful. But by using all these tools—medication, counseling and support—you can improve your chances of quitting successfully.

For more information visit www.americanlegacy.org.