

# 49th Great American Smokeout Calls for Renewed Commitment to Help Americans Quit Tobacco

The holidays often bring stress, a common trigger for tobacco use, but also offer a perfect moment to make a fresh start.

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This Thursday, November 20, the American Cancer Society will host the 49<sup>th</sup> annual [Great American Smokeout](#). As the holiday season approaches, a time known for its familiar mix of joy and stress, the event calls on people who smoke or use any form of tobacco to make a plan to quit and for policymakers to strengthen support for those individuals by funding and providing equitable access to cessation programs.

Tobacco use remains the leading preventable cause of death in the U.S., responsible for almost 30% of all cancer deaths and 80% of lung cancer deaths. Quitting saves lives, but recent federal cuts have made it harder for Americans to get the evidence-based help they need. In April, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services eliminated the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Office on Smoking and Health (OSH), the nation's leading agency for tobacco prevention and significant funder of quitlines across the country.

"Now is not the time to walk away from proven tobacco control efforts," said Lisa Lacasse, president of the American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network (ACS CAN). "We encourage Congress to continue investing in tobacco control and prevention and for the administration to restore personnel at OSH immediately so that we do not lose the significant gains we've made in reducing tobacco use in the last several decades. Additionally, we urge state and local governments to invest more in state tobacco control programs and enact proven tobacco control policies such as comprehensive smoke-free laws and regular and significant tax increases on all tobacco products—lives depend on it."

The holidays often bring stress, a common trigger for tobacco use, but also offer a perfect moment to make a fresh start. The American Cancer Society's Great American Smokeout is held every third Thursday in November and is a nationwide event that encourages and provides support for people who smoke to give up cigarettes — even for one day. The event is also a call to action to protect youth — 2.25 million of whom currently use tobacco products — from these deadly, addictive

products.

ACS CAN calls on lawmakers to commit to reducing the leading cause of cancer deaths in the U.S. by passing a full-year funding bill that includes robust funding for vital cancer prevention programs. Without these investments, a new generation risks lifelong addiction, and lives will be unnecessarily lost.

Free resources on quitting tobacco can be found through the American Cancer Society's cessation program, [Empowered to Quit](#).

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