



# Saint Anthony's Offers Freedom From Smoking

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(Alton, IL) – A recent report by the US Surgeon General shows that the addictive power of nicotine makes tobacco use more than a passing phase among teens, and that long-term tobacco use can significantly impact on a person's heart and lung health. To help tobacco users kick the habit now, Saint Anthony's Health Center is offering a free smoking cessation program for the community starting Monday, April 9 at 6 p.m. in the Auditorium of Saint Clare's Professional Building, 815 East Fifth Street.

Led by Tina Bennett, a trained smoking cessation facilitator, the program follows the American Lung Association's Freedom from Smoking curriculum. The eight-week program includes such topics as: motivation to quit, quitting, recovery and support, stress management, weight control and relapse prevention. The class is open for individuals who smoke or use tobacco; anyone under the age of 18 who would like to attend should be accompanied by a parent.

The Surgeon General's report released in early March shows that one of the most significant health effects is addiction to nicotine that keeps young people smoking longer, causing increased physical damage. Early abdominal aortic atherosclerosis has been found in young smokers which affects the flow of blood to vital organs such as the lungs. This leads to reduced lung growth that can increase the risk of chronic obstructive pulmonary disease later in life, and reduced lung function.

The report also shows a decline in youth tobacco use has slowed for cigarette smoking and stalled for use of smokeless tobacco. The latest research shows that concurrent use of multiple tobacco products is common among young people, and suggest that smokeless tobacco use is increasing among white males.

To register for Freedom from Smoking or for more information, please call 618-465-2264.