

Want to quit smoking? Freshstart program offers new beginning, lunch and learn set

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ALTON – Every year, people attempt to stop smoking with the knowledge of the health risks and long-time effects.

OSF Saint Anthony Healthcare is sponsoring a program with the help of the American Cancer Society and the oncology department. The program is a lunch and learn set from noon to 1 p.m. today, December 5th, at OSF HealthCare Saint Clare's Medical Office Building, Auditorium B, 815 E. 5th St., Alton. A free box lunch and beverage also will be provided.

The program will be presented by Karen Boyd, R.N., a primary charge nurse in radiation oncology for OSF HealthCare Saint Anthony's Cancer Center, who is also a Freshstart program facilitator. Three nurses and one patient navigator trained in Fresh Start will conduct a smoking cessation program at Saint Clare's on Tuesday January 8 from 6-7pm.

What is Freshstart?

Freshstart is designed to help smokers plan a successful quit attempt by providing essential information, skills for coping with cravings, and group support.

How does it work?

Freshstart incorporates the most current guidelines for tobacco cessation support into face-to-face group support sessions. Program participants choose a combination of techniques and cessation treatments they will use in their quit attempt.

The Freshstart evidence-based approach helps participants increase their motivation to quit, learn effective approaches for quitting and guide them in making a successful quit attempt through information, activities, and discussion.

The evidence-based components of Freshstart include:

Motivational intervention activities

Practical counseling (problem-solving skills)

Social support

Education about medication and approaches to quitting

The negative statistics surrounding cigarette smoking are staggering. The CDC says cigarette smoking is responsible for more than 480,000 deaths per year in the United States, including more than 41,000 deaths resulting from secondhand smoke exposure. This is about one in five deaths annually, or 1,300 deaths every day. On average, smokers die 10 years earlier than nonsmokers.

[According to the CDC](#), most exposure to secondhand smoke occurs in homes and workplaces. Secondhand smoke harms children and adults, and the only way to fully protect nonsmokers is to eliminate smoking in all homes, worksites, and public places. In children, secondhand smoke causes the following: Ear Infections, more frequent and severe asthma attacks, respiratory symptoms (coughing, sneezing, shortness of breath), respiratory infections (bronchitis and pneumonia), a greater risk for infant death syndrome (SIDS).

Those wanting to attend either the Freshstart Lunch and Learn or the Smoking Cessation Program are encouraged to register at www.osfsaintanthonys.org.