



# OSF HealthCare Saint Anthony's Health Center offering Freshstart smoking cessation program in the new year

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ALTON – If you are ready quit smoking, help is available through an upcoming American Cancer Society smoking cessation support program hosted by OSF Saint Anthony's Health Center. A free four-week Freshstart<sup>®</sup> program begins on Tuesday, January 8, from 6 to 7 p.m. in Auditorium B of OSF Saint Clare's Medical Office Building, 815 East Fifth Street.

Freshstart<sup>®</sup> is designed to help any tobacco user, including those who may be unsure about wanting to quit, and specifically addresses indecision about quitting.

According to Karen Boyd, RN, one of four trained smoking cessation facilitators at OSF Saint Anthony's, "We follow the American Cancer Society's program that teaches participants effective ways to overcome nicotine dependence, including essential information to plan a successful quit attempt, skills for coping with cravings and group support."

The evidence-based approach is geared to help participants increase their motivation to quit. "Participants learn effective approaches for quitting," says Karen. "They make an informed choice about the quitting techniques they will use such as cold turkey, scheduled smoking, medication, or tapering to guide them in making a successful quit attempt."

Benefits of smoking cessation, from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, include:

- *20 minutes after quitting:* heart rate, blood pressure drop.
- *12 hours after quitting:* carbon monoxide in blood stream drops to normal.

- *Two weeks to three months after quitting:* circulation, lung function improve; heart attack risk begins to drop.
- *One to nine months after quitting:* cough less, breathe easier.
- *One year after quitting:* risk of coronary heart disease cut in half.
- *Two to five years after quitting:* risk of cancer of mouth, throat, esophagus, bladder cut in half; stroke risk is reduced to that of a nonsmoker.
- *10 years after quitting:* half as likely to die from lung cancer; risk of kidney or pancreatic cancer decreases.
- *15 years after quitting:* risk of coronary heart disease same as a nonsmoker.

To register or learn more about the four-week Freshstart<sup>®</sup> program, please visit [www.osfsaintanthonys.org](http://www.osfsaintanthonys.org).