



Tuesday, April 3, 2012
National Public Health Week · www.nphw.org

A healthier America begins with living tobacco- and drug-free and preventing alcohol abuse

TOBACCO, DRUGS AND ALCOHOL KILL HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS OF AMERICANS each year. Death and disease from tobacco, drug and alcohol use is **preventable**. By living tobacco- drug- and alcohol- free, more Americans can live healthier, longer-lasting lives. If we take small actions, our communities, homes and families will see the large benefits of preventive care and grow the movement. Join the American Public Health Association as we work toward taking preventive measures to live healthier lives.

Did You Know?

- Cigarette smoking, which is the most common form of tobacco use, causes approximately 443,000 deaths and costs about \$96 billion in medical costs and \$97 billion in productivity losses in the United States each year.³³
- Every day, nearly 4,000 young people try their first cigarette and approximately 1,000 will become daily smokers. More than 80 percent of adult cigarette smokers start before their 18th birthday. Children of parents who smoke are twice as likely to become smokers themselves.³⁴
- More than a quarter of the U.S. population (88 million people), and more than half of all children in the United States, are exposed to secondhand smoke on a regular basis.³⁵
- Every day, almost 30 people in the United States die in motor vehicle crashes that involve an alcohol impaired driver – one death every 48 minutes.³⁶
- Chronic drug use, crime and incarceration are inextricably connected.³⁷

³³ Adhikari B, et al. Attributable Mortality, Years of Potential Life Lost, and Productivity Losses— United States, 2000–2004. MMWR 2008;57(45):1226–8.; Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Smoking-attributable mortality, morbidity, and economic costs (SAMMEC).

³⁴ Gilman SE, Rende R, Boergers J, et al., Parental Smoking and Adolescent Smoking Initiation: An Intergenerational Perspective on Tobacco Control, Pediatrics 2009 Feb;123(2): e274–e281.

³⁵ Dube SR, McClave A, James C, Caraballo R, Kaufmann R, Pechacek T. Vital Signs: Current Cigarette Smoking Among Adults Aged ≥18 Years — United States, 2009. MMWR. September 10, 2010. 59(35):1135–1140.

³⁶ Department of Transportation, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA). Traffic Safety Facts 2009: Alcohol-Impaired Driving. Washington, D.C.: NHTSA; 2010.

³⁷ Karberg JC, Mumola CJ. Drug Use and Dependence, State and Federal Prisons, 2004. Washington D.C.: Bureau of Justice Statistics. 2006: NCJ 213530.

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Together we can change these statistics and live longer and healthier lives. Each year, more than 443,000 people die from tobacco use, and nearly 80,000 die from alcohol use. Simple changes in lifestyle, daily routines and policy changes could save thousands of lives. The most effective prevention measures are created when the community, employers and employees work together to help reduce tobacco, alcohol and drug use. Taking action to do so is common sense, is effective and can save lives.

Start small...

- ✓ Quit using tobacco products. Ask your health service provider or call 1-800-QUIT-NOW for cessation support.
- ✓ Make homes smoke-free to protect yourself and your family members from secondhand smoke.
- ✓ Avoid binge drinking, use of illicit drugs or the misuse of prescription medications and, as needed, seek help from a clinician for substance use disorders.
- ✓ Encourage employers to develop substance management, tobacco-cessation and intervention programs for employees.
- ✓ Do not drive if you have been drinking alcohol or after taking any drug that can alter your ability to operate a motor vehicle.
- ✓ Advocate for smoke-free and tobacco-free policies that improve indoor air quality, reduce negative health outcomes among nonsmokers, decrease tobacco consumption and encourage tobacco users to quit.³⁸
- ✓ Promote tobacco-free environments in your home, business, school and areas of recreation to protect individuals from secondhand smoke.
- ✓ Ensure that youth cannot access alcohol in your home.

Think big...

- ✓ Support implementation and enforcement of alcohol and drug control policies.
- ✓ Increase awareness on the proper storage and disposal of prescription medications.
- ✓ Create a local movement: Write a letter to the editor of your local paper in response to a recent article that highlights the importance of living tobacco- and drug-free while avoiding high-risk alcohol consumption during NPHW and beyond.
- ✓ Invite local policymakers and others to a community roundtable to discuss substance abuse and follow up with specific actions.
- ✓ Support your family, friends and neighbors when they are working to live tobacco- and drug-free, and reduce high-risk alcohol consumption.

There is much more you can do to help live tobacco- and drug-free and avoid alcohol abuse. By raising prevention awareness within your community during National Public Health Week, you can help your community members live healthier and longer lives. To learn more about substance abuse and mental health services, visit

<http://www.samhsa.gov>.

³⁸ Guide to Community Preventive Services. Reducing Exposure to Environmental Tobacco Smoke: Smoking Bans and Restrictions.