



25 Years of Medals and Memories

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Message from the Assistant Secretary for Aging Kathy Greenlee

Smoking and Older Adults...Make a plan to quit today!

Tobacco use is the leading cause of premature and preventable death in the U.S., responsible for 443,000 deaths each year. Most of these deaths are among people age 65 and older. Smoking has profound effects on the lives and health of older adults, dramatically increasing their risk of heart attack, stroke, dementia and more.

On November 10, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services unveiled a new comprehensive tobacco control strategic action plan, "Ending the Tobacco Epidemic" that includes proposed new bolder health warnings on cigarette packages and advertisements. These actions are part of a broader strategy that will help tobacco users quit and prevent children from starting. To learn more about this plan, please visit <http://www.hhs.gov/tobaccocontrol/index.html>

Quitting smoking has health benefits – no matter what your age. Today marks the 35th Great American Smokeout – a day when smokers around the country are encouraged to quit smoking or to make a plan to quit. If you're a smoker with Medicare and want to kick the habit, Medicare can help. For more information, please visit <http://www.medicare.gov/navigation/manage-your-health/preventive-services/smoking-cessation.aspx>. Any smoker covered by Medicare can receive tobacco cessation counseling from a qualified physician or other Medicare-recognized practitioner who can work with them to help him or her stop using tobacco. And thanks to the Affordable Care Act, as of January 1, 2011, these services will be available at no cost to people with Medicare.

For more resources and support related to quitting smoking, visit www.smokefree.gov or call 1-800-QUIT-NOW.