



November 2006

Quitting Time:

The Great American SmokeOut

On November 16th, join the thousands of smokers who will make a lifestyle change that will improve their lives in many positive ways.

If you're joining the Great American Smokeout on November 16, you'll have a great incentive to kick the tobacco habit for 24 hours--and the rest of your life.

"Successful quitters realize the Smokeout is the beginning of a process that will change their lives in a lot of positive ways. They plan ahead for a smoke-free life," says Brent Saunders of the American Cancer Society's New York office.

"When you quit, the smoke literally clears. You see how addictive tobacco really was--and how it dominated every aspect of your life," Saunders explains. "When it's gone, many things are going to feel different to you."

For example:

- Without cigarette breaks, you'll probably have more time and freedom throughout your day.
- Instead of being corralled in smoking areas, you'll probably see more of other people and places.
- You'll start feeling more healthy and fit.
- You'll get back in touch with sensations, emotions and reactions that had been masked by nicotine and other tobacco chemicals.

Of course, you'll also experience symptoms of withdrawal--cravings, mood alterations and, probably, the desire to chew on something.

EMBRACING CHANGE

Even changes for the better can be upsetting, especially if you're not expecting them. Instead of being blindsided, prepare yourself for what's likely to happen.

Think about how quitting will affect your life and line up support systems to help you cope.

For example:

If you're used to eating lunch or taking breaks with a group of smokers, do something else at those times. Such as:

- Talk to friends who are smokers about your plan to quit and ask them to join you in nonsmoking situations.
- Learn stress-management skills before you quit.

- If you're worried about withdrawal, talk with a doctor or counselor about what's likely to happen and how you can cope.

"When you accept that quitting isn't going to be easy, then you can put your energy into doing what you need to do to be successful," says Saunders.

MAKE THE BREAK

After you quit, you can smooth the transition from a smoking to a nonsmoking lifestyle. Saunders recommends these strategies:

- Ask for help. Be specific about what you need. Don't be shy about asking for support from professional counselors and smoking-cessation programs, your local chapter of the American Cancer Society, your employee assistance program or your primary-care physician.
- You can also find help on the Web; for example, Nicotine Anonymous has a full Web-based support system at www.nicotine-anonymous.org.
- Change your habits. If you change one aspect of your behavior, you also need to change habits that surround and support it; otherwise, you'll keep obsessing about what's missing.
- To create new behaviors, use a personal journal to analyze your responses to various situations that trigger cravings, stress or other problems. Explore alternatives and come up with better responses if necessary.
- Listen closely to the messages you send to yourself or receive from others. If you hear a lot of negatives or fears, use positive self-talk to train that voice in your head to say, "Yes, I can." Reinforce your decision to quit by rewarding yourself with gifts at milestones, such as one-week, one-month and six-month anniversaries.

Help others become tobacco-free. As a former smoker, you have a lot to give others going through the process.

"By helping others, you also help yourself," says Saunders. "Every time you tell someone about the benefits of not smoking, you remind yourself you made the right choice."

For further information visit www.cancer.org.

Turkey

Takeover

This leanest of birds has progressed from a pilgrim's feast to a low-fat ingredient in everything from hot dogs to sausage to pastrami.

Could it be that we're becoming a nation of turkeys?

In an age of low-fat, high-protein diets, consumers are gobbling more and more of this lean bird. In 2005, U.S. consumption of turkey was 16.7 pounds per person, the National Turkey Federation reports. What's more, we're not just flocking to turkey around Thanksgiving. Year-round, we're buying a variety of sizes, shapes and textures.

In your grocer's case, chances are you'll find whole turkeys and parts -- fresh, frozen and smoked. You'll also see ground turkey, turkey cutlets, turkey hot dogs, turkey sausage and turkey burgers next to the high-fat beef and pork favorites.

A well-stocked deli offers sliced turkey a half-dozen ways from roasted to barbecued, and even turkey pastrami. In fact, sandwiches account for 51 percent of turkey consumption, according to Norbest, a Utah turkey-marketing cooperative.

"The whole focus [today] is on lowering fat intake, particularly saturated fats," says Wahida Karmally, R.D., Director of Nutrition in The Irving Center for Clinical Research. "If you look at how lean it can get, turkey is the leanest of all -- even chicken." Turkey also offers more iron and vitamins than most fish.

But turkey should be just one alternative in a healthy diet that includes variety, Ms. Karmally says.

"People want to develop good eating styles," she says. "And if people try to make these drastic changes and limit foods, they are not going to stick to that eating pattern for a long time."

Some turkey products draw criticism for being too tough or too dry. That's often due to preparation. Consumers are learning to make turkey in ways that keep it from drying out.

Turkey Tidbits

- More than one-fourth of all households consume turkey deli meats at least once every two weeks.
- A 15-pound turkey has about 70 percent white meat and 30 percent dark meat. The white meat has fewer calories and less fat.
- Benjamin Franklin proposed the turkey as the official U.S. bird and reportedly was dismayed when the bald eagle won out.
- Only tom turkeys gobble. Hen turkeys make a clicking noise.
- The top five most popular ways to eat leftover turkey: a sandwich; soup or stew; salad; casserole; and stir-fry.

A thermometer can help ensure a moist meal. The bird's internal temperature is the true indicator of readiness -- 170 degrees for the breast and 180 degrees in the thigh. And when it's done, it's done.

Despite turkey's rising popularity, there's room for growth. While Americans consumed an average of 16.7 pounds per capita in 2005, that left turkey in fourth place behind chicken (86 pounds), beef (65 pounds) and pork (50 pounds), according to the National Turkey Federation.

News For Your Knees

The knee is a joint where three bones join: the femur, or thigh bone; the tibia, or shin bone; and the patella, or knee cap. Four ligaments attach to the femur and tibia and give the joint strength and stability. One of these, the anterior cruciate ligament (ACL), is in the center of the knee and limits rotation and the forward movement of the tibia. Each year, more than 100,000 Americans tear their ACLs.

The ACL is most often stretched or torn (or both) by a sudden twisting motion -- when, for example, your feet are planted one way and your knees are turned another. You can also injure your ACL by quickly changing the direction in which you're moving; by putting the brakes on too quickly when running; or when landing from a jump.

Recognizing an ACL injury

People who play basketball, volleyball or soccer or who ski are most likely to injure their ACLs when they slow down, pivot or land after a jump.

If you injure yours, you may not feel any pain immediately. You might hear a popping noise and feel your knee give out from under you.

Within a few hours, you'll notice swelling at the knee. The knee will hurt when you try to stand on it. It's important to keep weight off the knee until you can see your health care provider, or you may injure the knee cartilage. You should use an ice pack to reduce swelling and keep the leg elevated. If needed, use a pain reliever. If you must walk, use crutches.

"You need to get to your doctor right away to have your knee evaluated," says Dr. Griffin.

Diagnosis

Your doctor may conduct physical tests and take X-rays to determine the extent of your ACL damage. If the ACL is only partially torn, your doctor may prescribe an exercise program to strengthen surrounding muscles and a brace to protect the knee during activity. You may or may not need surgery. Surgery can reattach the torn

ends of the ligament or reconstruct the torn ligament from a piece (graft) of strong, healthy tissue taken from another area near the knee (autograft) or from a cadaver (allograft). If the ACL is completely torn, it may need to be replaced surgically.

Successful surgery tightens your knee and restores its stability, which helps you avoid further injury. You'll need to do rehabilitation exercises to gradually return your knee to full flexibility and stability. You also may need a knee brace temporarily and will probably have to stay out of sports for about a year after the surgery.

Prevention

Many ACL injuries can be prevented if the muscles that surround the knees are strong and flexible.

"Athletes of all ages should do drills that focus on balance, as well as those that link strength and speed," says Dr. Griffin. "Jumping and other balance drills help to provide conditioning that can reduce the risk of ACL injury."

Athletes also should practice staying balanced over their lower legs and playing on the balls of their feet with their hips and knees flexed.

The following training tips can reduce the risk of an ACL injury:

- Train and condition year-round.
- Practice proper landing technique after jumps.
- When you pivot, crouch and bend at the knees and hips. This reduces stress on the ACL.
- Strengthen your hamstring and quadriceps muscles.

The hamstring muscle is at the back of the thigh; the quadriceps muscle is at the front. The muscles work together to bend or straighten the leg. Strengthening both muscles can better protect the leg against knee injuries.

"Perseverance is failing 9 times and succeeding the 10th."

-J. Andrews

Resolve to Eat Healthy Now

Indulging over the holidays can do more than stretch your waistline. An American Heart Association report shows that the risk of having a heart attack is four times greater after eating a large meal high in fat and calories. The good news is that you can enjoy the holidays in a healthy way.

Get Creative

These simple changes to your recipes can reduce fat and calories while keeping the flavor:

- Use egg substitutes or egg whites (two whites per one whole egg).
- When a recipe calls for oil or butter, try a fruit puree, such as applesauce, instead.
- Use half the sugar called for in pie recipes.
- Use low-fat dairy products.

Change one ingredient at a time so that you know which changes you like best.

Party Planner

At holiday parties, you don't always have control over the types of foods available. Make the best of your choices and cut back on portions:

- Take only a sliver of your favorite desserts.
- If you're having pie, don't eat all the crust.
- Sample the fresh fruit platter.
- Avoid alcohol.
- Eat a healthy meal before the party so that you don't overindulge.

When you bring a dish to share, keep in mind that the guests may also be watching their eating habits. Offer healthy alternatives to feel good about what you're serving.

Deskercise Corner: Strong and Stable Knees

Leg Extension

Sit in chair with Abs tight. Extend one leg until level with hip. Hold for 2 seconds, repeat other side.