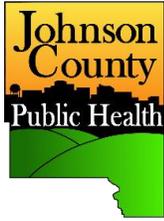


*A healthful and supportive environment where all people of Johnson County
can achieve optimal physical, mental, and social well-being.*



Dave Koch
Director

Press Release

For Immediate Release
November 13, 2017

Contact: Susan Vileta, Health Educator
356-6040

Johnson County Public Health Encourages Residents To Observe Great American Smokeout

Johnson County Public Health is proud to participate in the American Cancer Society's Great American Smokeout® on Thursday, November 16th. This event serves as an effort to promote cancer prevention, reduce second hand smoke exposure and improve the health of all Americans. This year Johnson County, along with Iowa Cancer Consortium, Iowa City Free Medical Clinic, Iowa City VA Health Care System, Prelude Behavioral Services and Systems Unlimited, Inc., are encouraging staff, clients, and patients to commit or recommit to living healthy, tobacco-free lives.

Tobacco use is the single largest preventable cause of disease and premature death in the United States. Yet, 40 million American adults still smoke. Around 17 percent of Iowans aged 18 and older reported being current smokers in 2016 (BRFSS, 2016). Tobacco use increases the risk for coronary heart disease, stroke, and lung cancer. Most of us know all too well the devastating impact tobacco can have on people's health.

The most important thing someone who smokes can do to improve their health is to quit. At the same time, we know tobacco is one of the strongest addictions one can have. We used to encourage smokers to quit cold turkey on a single day. However, we now know that quitting is a process. It starts with a plan, often takes time and requires a lot of support. Susan Vileta, Health Educator for Johnson County Public Health, urges, "Take advantage of the free help Quitline Iowa offers! This November celebrate the Great American Smokeout® by contacting Quitline Iowa at **1-800-QUIT-NOW (784-8669)** or www.QUITLINEIOWA.org to access qualified tobacco cessation coaches and other necessary support to successfully kick tobacco addiction for good."

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