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News Release

For Immediate Release

Free seven-week smoking cessation program begins Sept. 11

Change is in the air as the calendar turns to fall, and now is a great time for smokers to kick the habit for good. If you are a tobacco user, quitting is likely the single most important step you can take to positively impact your health. Quitting can add years to your life and will boost your quality of life during those years.

For those who are ready to quit and want a proven tool to help them do so, the Springfield-Greene County Health Department is once again offering the Freedom From Smoking program during September and October. The seven-week program is free and open to anyone, but class size is limited and participants are asked to register in advance. Nicotine replacement medications, a workbook and other informative materials are provided.

The upcoming classes will be held during the lunch hour from noon to 1 p.m. on Sept. 11, 18 & 27 and Oct. 2, 4, 9, 16 & 23 at the United Way of the Ozarks office, 320 N. Jefferson Ave.

Freedom From Smoking is a smoking cessation program developed by the American Lung Association that has been helping people quit the habit for more than 30 years. It features a small-group setting led by a trained facilitator who takes participants through a step-by-step plan to quit smoking. Each session is designed to help smokers gain control over their behavior. The group format encourages participants to work on the process and problems of quitting both individually and as part of a group. Topics covered include:

- Lifestyle changes to help you quit
- Preparing for "quit day"
- Managing stress
- Avoiding weight gain
- Developing a new self image
- Staying smoke-free for good

The health department is once again partnering with the Health Living Alliance to put on this program and provide needed materials for participants.

The first class of the next session is at noon, Wednesday, Sept. 11. To register, contact Rinda Dunn, Public Health Nurse, at (417) 864-1498 or by e-mail at rdunn@springfieldmo.gov.

More information: <http://health.springfieldmo.gov/smokefree>

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