

Press release

200,000 lives in London could be saved if smokers quit for good

Figures released today, No Smoking Day, reveal that one in five (22 per cent) smokers say that they will try to, or definitely stop smoking when the UK goes completely smokefree from July 1st. If every smoker who stopped was successful the number of lives saved would be 200,000 lives. That's equivalent to nobody dying in London for nearly four years! [1]

No Smoking Day, the charity behind today's campaign commissioned a YouGov survey on public awareness of the incoming ban on smoking in enclosed public places and workplaces. The survey showed that 22 per cent of smokers in London plan to make a quit attempt as England goes smokefree.

Ben Youdan, Chief Executive of No Smoking Day, which runs the annual health awareness campaign said: "No Smoking Day is the ideal opportunity to stop smoking before Smokefree comes into place this summer. More than two-thirds of smokers in London say they want to quit smoking and should seek advice and support from stop smoking services to do that.

"This could be one of the biggest changes in public health in decades and we need to be ready to give all these smokers the help and support they need to quit. £56 million has been spent on NHS stop smoking services who are expecting their busiest ever year."

It's not just the NHS preparing to help smokers; employers up and down the UK are gearing up for smokefree legislation by helping their staff and customers to stop smoking. No Smoking Day has had unprecedented demand from big companies wanting to help their employees to stop smoking.

Jennette Arnold AM, Chair, London Health Commission said:

"We know that the majority of people who smoke want to quit and that quitting smoking is the best decision you can make for your health and well-being. No Smoking Day 2007 is the perfect opportunity to take this step, as we get closer to the smoke-free law that will come into force in July.

“London Health Commission's Big Smoke Debate in 2003 found an overwhelming proportion of Londoners in favour of smoke-free policies and since then, the call for completely smoke-free enclosed workplaces and public places has got louder and louder. The new law will give everybody the right to a smoke-free working environment and make smoke-free the norm in our enclosed public places.

“No Smoking Day is a key milestone in building the momentum towards a smoke-free London. Best of luck to everyone who's making a fresh start on March 14th.”

Smokers who want to quit smoking should seek help from local NHS stop smoking services – those who use stop smoking services are four times more likely to succeed in their quit attempt.

Today, local organisers all around the UK will be promoting No Smoking Day and will be available in local supermarkets, shopping malls and other local spots to provide help and support to those considering quitting smoking.

To find a local stop smoking service log onto www.nosmokingday.org.uk or call 0800 169 0 169.

[1] All deaths in England and Wales 2004 was 512,541, 2005 was 512,692.

Source: ONS

**For further information, contact Vishnee Sauntoo, Campaign Manager or Michelle Wong, Campaign Officer on 0870 770 7909 or email: vishnee@nosmokingday.org.uk
Out of office press mobile: 07770 657 241**

www.nosmokingday.org.uk

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Notes to editors

Region	Number of smokers who will try to quit	Percentage of smokers who will try to quit (%)	Number of lives that could be saved
UK	1 in 5	20	1.25 million
England – North East	1 in 4	25	80,000
England – North West	1 in 4	26	200,000
England – Yorkshire and the Humber	1 in 4	29	170,000
England – East Midlands	1 in 5	20	93,000
England – West Midlands	1 in 6	15	83,000
England – East of England	1 in 5	22	125,000
England – London	1 in 5	22	200,000
England – South East	1 in 5	18	152,000
England – South West	1 in 5	21	111,000
Northern Ireland	1 in 10	11	25,000

Scotland	1 in 10	12	84,000
Wales	1 in 5	19	62,000

All figures, unless otherwise stated, are from YouGov Plc. Total sample size was 2,260 adults. Field work was undertaken from 16th - 19th February 2007. The survey was carried out online. The figures have been weighted and are representative of all UK adults (ages 18+).

To find out where your local stop smoking service is log onto www.nosmokingday.org.uk or call 0800 169 0 169

Quit – a charity-run helpline for those wishing to quit smoking - 0800 00 22 00

No Smoking Day (NSD) is organised by a charity of the same name run by four full time staff. Based in London, the charity is funded by a coalition of governmental and voluntary sector organisations with an interest in health.

NSD aims to help people who want to stop smoking by creating a supportive environment for them, and by highlighting the many sources of help available to people who want to quit.

Now in its 24th year it is a firm fixture in the UK calendar because of its popularity amongst smokers and continued success. Three quarters of smokers would like to stop and on NSD over a million try. NSD isn't just about the Day. Stopping smoking requires much planning, encouragement, support and motivation. Helping others to prepare to quit can be done year round, but the Day provides an excellent focus and motivation for many smokers to stop.

ISDN line available for interviews - 020 7729 7625

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Facts and figures

No Smoking Day's top tips for successful quitting

- Find a buddy who's also going to stop smoking – it's easier if you've got a friend
- Patches and nicotine gum are a great way to stop the cravings – and available on prescription from your doctor.
- Enrol in a free NHS stop smoking course – contact your GP surgery for details of a local venue
- Save the money you used to spend on cigarettes in a jar and treat yourself after a month: if you smoked 20 a day, you'll have saved £155

Make a fresh start with better health

The health benefits of stopping smoking start almost immediately:

After...

- **20 minutes:** Blood pressure and pulse return to normal
- **8 hours:** Nicotine and carbon monoxide levels in the blood are halved, oxygen levels in the blood return to normal
- **24 hours:** Carbon monoxide is eliminated from the body and the lungs start to clear out the build up of tar
- **48 hours:** There is no nicotine left in the body. Taste and smell are greatly improved
- **1 year:** Risk of heart attack is halved

Make a fresh start with more money

Stopping smoking isn't about losing something – it's about gaining a lot! A packet of cigarettes costs around £5 so quitting will give a 20-a-day smoker an extra £35 a week. The benefits of stopping smoking soon start adding up...

- 1 day: £5 = a movie rental or a few magazines
- 1 week: £35 = a cheap flight abroad or a few CDs
- 1 month: £152 = a shopping spree or the monthly food bill
- 3 months: £456 = two weeks in the sun or a new computer
- 6 months: £912 = a family holiday or some new furniture
- 1 year: £1825 = a second-hand car or the start of a deposit for a house

These figures are based on a 20-a-day smoker paying £5 per packet of 20 cigarettes.

Smoking Statistics

Did you know.....?

- 112,000 premature deaths per year from smoking related diseases
- 1 in 2 smokers will die early as a result of using tobacco
- 11 million smokers in UK – that is a quarter of the population
- 24% of men and 23% of women smoke
- Smoking is highest among 20-24 year olds – 34% of men and 30% of women smoke
- 80% of smokers start as teenagers – in the UK, 450 children start smoking every day
- 70% of current smokers would like to give up altogether