



***NOTE TO MEDIA:** Additional "Success Stories" and corresponding photos for different regions of New York State are available to read or download at the New York State Smokers' Quitline's Online News Room: <https://nysmokefree.com/newsroom>. Please reach out to us any time for interviews to enhance your coverage of New Year's resolutions and wellness stories. Tobacco cessation experts are available locally and via Zoom; clients may be available upon request.*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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RON A. SHARES TOBACCO-FREE TIPS FOR THE NEW YEAR

With assistance from the New York State Smokers' Quitline, Buffalo resident is living proof 'it's never too late' to stop smoking



BUFFALO, N.Y. – December 30, 2021 – The beginning of a new year is a popular time to make resolutions for improved wellness. For those who use tobacco products, the New Year provides an opportunity to seek assistance to become tobacco-free. The **New York State Smokers' Quitline** (Quitline) understands the challenges involved to stop smoking for good, and reminds all New York State residents free resources are available seven days a week at 1-866-NY-QUITS (1-866-697-8487) and nysmokefree.com.

Ron A. of Buffalo, N.Y. (*pictured in photo*) first tried cigarettes as a child with older cousins. By his teenage years, he was a regular smoker and remained as such for more than 40 years. By his mid-50's, Ron's breathing deteriorated and he grew tired of his addiction to cigarettes. He reached out to the Quitline in 2018, discussed his triggers and received free nicotine patches. Ron felt empowered with a quit-plan, but he didn't achieve ultimate success right away.

"I had become tobacco-free for a few months, then had a moment of stress and thought I could have just one cigarette," Ron said. "Was I wrong! My quit-attempt didn't work out that time, but I knew I'd try again."

Ron, in fact, tried twice more with the Quitline. He connected again in spring of 2019 and again received nicotine patches, only to have a similar unsuccessful outcome as the previous year. The third time was a charm in 2021 with the Quitline. Throughout late winter and early spring, Ron gradually reduced his cigarette intake and again used the nicotine patch to control cravings. By the end of April, he no longer felt the desire to smoke.

"A big part of the success was the follow-up calls from the Quitline," Ron said. "It was so helpful to know someone was looking out for my well-being. That encouraged me to feel good about what I was doing and to keep going. At first, it felt strange to become a non-smoker, but I definitely have no complaints now and it is so worth it to be tobacco-free. Looking back, I wish I had never started smoking in the first place."

Now age 57, Ron feels healthy, is exercising more and enjoys better breathing. He knows becoming tobacco-free was challenging and is resolute to remain vigilant during future stressful occasions. However, he also believes that by sharing his experiences, he can help others reach their tobacco-free goals. Ron offers the following four tips for those seeking to become tobacco-free in 2022:

- 1.) *"It's important to have a support system during your quit-attempt. As a start, you can call the Quitline's Quit Coaches; they're there for encouragement and will help you when you have cravings. Call your friends, too."*
- 2.) *"When a craving occurs, immediately find something to occupy your time for a few minutes. Cravings are hard to overcome at first, but you'll get through it."*
- 3.) *"Keep trying to become tobacco-free. It will work eventually. Even if you slip up, you can look back at your past attempts as practice and think about what you learned."*
- 4.) *"If your mind is made up to become tobacco-free, do it and don't look back."*

The Quitline's Quit Coaches help tobacco users develop a personalized approach for success by listing triggers and setting a quit-date. Most people also are eligible to receive a free starter supply of nicotine replacement therapy (NRT) via mail, typically in the form of nicotine patches and often with supplemental nicotine gum or nicotine lozenges. When used as instructed and in combination, NRT products can double or triple the odds of becoming and staying tobacco-free.

The Quitline also recommends all tobacco users – whether they are practicing their first or tenth quit-attempt – to visit the CDC’s “Benefits of Quitting” website at https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/quit_smoking/how_to_quit/benefits/index.htm. This resource offers a thorough compilation of health benefits at any age, regardless of how long or how much one smoked.

The Quitline wishes all New York State residents a happy, healthy and tobacco-free 2022.

About the New York State Smokers’ Quitline

The New York State Smokers’ Quitline is a service of the New York State Department of Health and based at Roswell Park Comprehensive Cancer Center in Buffalo, N.Y. It is one of the first and busiest state quitlines in the nation and has responded to nearly 3 million calls since it began operating in 2000. The Quitline encourages nicotine users to talk with their healthcare professionals and access available Medicaid or health insurance benefits for stop-smoking medications. All New York State residents can call **1-866-NY-QUITS** (1-866-697-8487) for coaching and resources, free of charge, seven days a week beginning at 9 a.m. Visit www.nysmokefree.com for more information.

About Roswell Park Comprehensive Cancer Center

Roswell Park Comprehensive Cancer Center is a community united by the drive to eliminate cancer’s grip on humanity by unlocking its secrets through personalized approaches and unleashing the healing power of hope. Founded by Dr. Roswell Park in 1898, it is the only National Cancer Institute-designated comprehensive cancer center in Upstate New York. Learn more at www.roswellpark.org, or contact us at 1-800-ROSWELL (1-800-767-9355) or ASKRoswell@roswellpark.org.

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