



***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 online; clients may be available upon request.*

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WESTERN NEW YORK RESIDENT ACHIEVES FREEDOM FROM SMOKING WITH SUPPORT FROM THE NYS SMOKERS' QUITLINE

Dana B. from Amherst overcame 30 years of cigarette smoking



AMHERST, N.Y. – Jan. 4, 2023 – Quitting smoking or vaping is challenging; however, people across New York State achieve lasting success every day with proper support. The **New York State Smokers' Quitline** (Quitline) celebrates those who pursue and maintain tobacco-free living and encourages those who smoke or vape to make a quit-attempt in 2023 – whether it's a first time or trying again. The Quitline reminds all New York State residents personalized support from trained tobacco treatment specialists and free resources are available seven days a week by calling 1-866-NY-QUITS (1-866-697-8487), texting QUITNOW to 333888 and

visiting nysmokefree.com.

For Dana B. (*pictured*), age 51 of Amherst, N.Y., timing was everything in his journey to become tobacco-free. He smoked a pack-a-day of cigarettes since age 18 and tried to stop a few times throughout his life, but usually never for more than a few days. Suddenly on March 2, 2020, Dana suffered a brain aneurysm and went to a Buffalo hospital.

"The neurosurgeons discovered a black-colored plaque leading into the main vessel to the brain," Dana recalled. "I always felt like a fit individual despite my smoking. The images of the plaque showed the damage cigarettes were doing to my health. I learned I essentially had a 1-in-3 chance of dying, a 1-in-3 chance of paralysis and a 1-in-3 chance of walking out of the hospital."

Fortunately for Dana and his family, the latter of the three possibilities happened. He received his hospital discharge in late March, just before hospital beds became increasingly occupied by more patients at the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. Before he left for home, Dana learned about the New York State Smokers' Quitline and called 1-866-NY-QUITS to speak with a trained tobacco treatment specialist.

"A free shipment of nicotine patches and nicotine gum were waiting for me when I arrived home," he said. "I also received follow-up calls from the Quitline and the check-ins really kept me going to pursue my goal of becoming and staying tobacco-free. Without all the support, I may have had a relapse and risked having another aneurysm."

By May of 2020, Dana weaned from the nicotine patches and nicotine gum. He developed new routines to keep himself busy in place of smoking. Dana knows without the tools from the Quitline and the added encouragement from his family and healthcare professionals, the past three years of his life would look very different.

"It's awesome, just a great feeling to be tobacco-free," Dana said. "Food tastes great and I can smell the air like there's no tomorrow. Every smoker's situation is different, so my advice to someone trying to quit is to find your own path and identify added reasons for sticking with it. If you're older, get health screenings for COPD and lung cancer. Finally, remember the Quitline can give you a nice springboard to get started on your journey and help you be accountable."

Most New York State adults are eligible to receive a free starter supply of nicotine replacement therapy (NRT) medications via mail, typically in the form of nicotine patches and often with supplemental nicotine gum or nicotine lozenges. When used appropriately and in combination, NRT medications can double or triple the odds of becoming and staying tobacco-free.

For those who prefer support via text, the Quitline reminds all New York State residents to try the new Learn2QuitNY six-week comprehensive program by enrolling at nysmokefree.com or texting QUITNOW to 333888. The Quitline also recommends all tobacco and vape product users to visit the CDC's "[Resolve to Be Smokefree in '23](http://www.cdc.gov/resolve)" website, complete with tips, resources, links and app recommendations.

The Quitline wishes everyone a happy, healthy and tobacco-free 2023.

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 tobacco and vape product users to talk with their healthcare professionals and access available Medicaid or health insurance benefits for medication support. All New York State residents can call **1-866-NY-QUITS** (1-866-697-8487) or text QUITNOW to 333888 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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