

Press Release



MARCH 2004

No Smoking Day – 10 March, 2004 'Quit & Win' – With Advice from Your Pharmacist

So much research has been carried out by official and unofficial bodies on the effects of smoking, including 'passive' smoking that the findings are overwhelming. We are left in no doubt that 'smoke' seriously affects your health. In the UK there are 120,000 deaths a year (1,000 from 'passive' smoking) and 364,000 hospital admissions, 8 Million consultations and 7 Million prescriptions, as a result of smoking-related illnesses. A staggering half of all smokers die from the habit if they continue to smoke.

It is hardly surprising then that the British Medical Association (BMA) and the 13 Royal Medical Colleges of Great Britain have called for a ban on smoking in public places. And the Government is currently trying to gauge the public's views on whether Local Councils should be given the power to bring in smoking restrictions in workplaces and public places.

John D'Arcy, Chief Executive of The National Pharmaceutical Association (NPA) who represents the nation's community pharmacists comments: "As health professionals, we are not without sympathy for the smoker who wants to give up but finds it difficult. If you know someone who smokes and want to help them stop, suggest they have a chat with their local pharmacist who will be able to provide effective practical advice and on-going support, in addition to offering a range of anti-smoking products to help them kick their habit. For instance, NRT (Nicotine Replacement Therapy) has helped a lot of people to stop smoking. Of course, it's not a magic cure, you need willpower too but there is evidence to show that it can *double* your chances of being able to *quit successfully*, provided it's used correctly."

NRT apparently works by gradually weaning you off nicotine, while you concentrate on breaking your smoking habits. It comes in different strengths and is available in: patches; gums; nasal sprays; tablets; inhalators and lozenges. People who find they need something to do with their hands often find an inhalator suits them best; others who need help controlling withdrawal symptoms sometimes benefit more from using a patch or gum. To be sure of choosing the best NRT product for you, it's advisable to speak with your local pharmacist.

John D'Arcy goes on to say: "Research has proved that teenagers are influenced by parents or older siblings who smoke and sadly, the younger a person is when they start, the more likely they are to suffer from smoking-related illness and of course, the harder it is to give up. By quitting smoking, you will not only be improving your own health but setting a good example to younger 'would-be' smokers. Surely that's a real incentive for anyone to give up?"

The good news is that with practical advice, effective products and support from your local pharmacist – giving up *is* possible. By speaking with your pharmacist you can establish a programme that would best increase your chances of quitting smoking. No Smoking Day – 10 March, 2004, www.nosmokingday.org.uk, www.ash.org.uk.

Ask Your Pharmacist – You'll be taking good advice !
Your local pharmacist – helping you stay fit and healthy for 2004

Notes to editors

1. The National Pharmaceutical Association (NPA) is the trade association that represents the professional and commercial interests of the owners of around 11,000 community pharmacies in the United Kingdom.
2. If you would like to arrange a media interview with a pharmacist local to your area, please contact the Press Office on 01727 858687 Exts 3265, 3227 or 3311. Alternatively, you can e-mail us at press.office@npa.co.uk.

<http://www.askyourpharmacist.co.uk/>

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