



A CUP OF HEALTH WITH CDC

Kick the Habit

Surveillance for Cancers Associated with Tobacco Use — United States, 1999–2004

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[Announcer] This podcast is presented by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. CDC — safer, healthier people.

[Dr. Gaynes] Welcome to *A Cup of Health with CDC*, a weekly feature of the MMWR, the Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report. I'm your host, Dr. Robert Gaynes.

The solution seems so simple: stop smoking and live longer and healthier. After all, tobacco use is the leading preventable cause of disease and premature death in the U.S. Yet millions of Americans still struggle with addiction to tobacco products. During a recent six-year study, more than 2.4 million cases of tobacco-related cancer were diagnosed in the U.S.

Dr. Sherri Stewart is a researcher with CDC's National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion. She's joining us today to discuss tobacco-related cancers. Welcome to the show, Sherri.

[Dr. Stewart] Thanks. Nice to be here.

[Dr. Gaynes] Sherri, how many people die each year from tobacco-related diseases?

[Dr. Stewart] About 400,000 deaths occur each year from tobacco-related illnesses, and there are three major causes of those and that's cancer; chronic lung diseases, including emphysema and bronchitis; and cardiovascular diseases.

[Dr. Gaynes] So, what's the most common cause of tobacco-related deaths?

[Dr. Stewart] Cancer is actually the most common cause of tobacco-related deaths. Approximately 160 thousand tobacco-related deaths are caused each year by cancer.

[Dr. Gaynes] Which cancers are most common among people who use tobacco products?

[Dr. Stewart] According to a 2004 report from the U.S. Surgeon General, there were ten types of cancer that were directly caused by tobacco use. And those are cancers of the lung, larynx, oral cavity, esophagus, stomach, pancreas, kidney, bladder, and cervix, and also a specific type of leukemia.

[Dr. Gaynes] Wow—that's quite a list!

[Dr. Stewart] Yes, it is.

[Dr. Gaynes] So, what are we doing, from a public health perspective, to impact tobacco use in the United States?

[Dr. Stewart] Well, efforts to reduce nonsmoker secondhand smoke exposure have been a noteworthy success story, and states that have made tobacco control a priority have benefited from the commitment. For example, in California, which has a long-running tobacco-control program, which includes stopping people from starting tobacco use, helping people to quit who use tobacco, and eliminating exposure to secondhand smoke in nonsmokers, they have been able to demonstrate decreases in lung cancer that occur nearly four times faster than in the rest of the United States.

[Dr. Gaynes] Sherri, what suggestions do you have for people who want to stop using tobacco?

[Dr. Stewart] Well, fortunately, there are more scientifically proven tools available to help people quit smoking and protect their health now than ever before, including safe and effective medications and counseling. There's also a toll-free number, 1-800-QUIT-NOW, which provides help in quitting tobacco for everyone in all fifty states, and it's free of charge.

[Dr. Gaynes] Where can listeners get more information about kicking the tobacco habit?

[Dr. Stewart] We recommend that people speak to their physician or health-care provider for more information on the best approaches to quit. And additional information and advice on how to quit smoking is also available at www.cdc.gov/tobacco.

[Dr. Gaynes] Sherri, thanks for sharing this information with our listeners today.

[Dr. Stewart] Thank you so much. Appreciate it.

[Dr. Gaynes] That's it for this week's show. Be sure and join us next week. Until then, be well. This is Dr. Robert Gaynes for *A Cup of Health with CDC*.

[Announcer] For the most accurate health information, visit www.cdc.gov or call 1-800-CDC-INFO, 24/7.