



PRESS RELEASE

WORLD NO TOBACCO DAY, 31st May, 2021

Theme – “COMMIT TO QUIT”

Every year 31st May is observed as the World No Tobacco Day with the motive to instill and strengthen the fight against the production and use of tobacco in any form and to draw global attention to the tobacco epidemic and the preventable death and disease it causes.

WHO has recently launched a year-long global campaign for World No Tobacco Day 2021 with the Theme “*Commit to Quit*”. This campaign aims to support people in their attempts to give up tobacco through various initiatives and digital solutions.

The COVID-19 pandemic has led tobacco users wanting to quit. However, quitting tobacco is challenging, especially with the added social and economic stresses brought about by the pandemic.

There are immediate and long-term health benefits to quitting tobacco. After just 20 minutes of quitting smoking, the heart rate drops. Within 12 hours, the carbon monoxide level in the blood drops to normal. Within 2–12 weeks, the circulation improves and lung function increases. Within 1–9 months, coughing and shortness of breath decrease. Within 5–15 years, the risk of getting a stroke is reduced to that of a non-smoker. Within 10 years, the lung cancer death rate is about half that of a smoker. Within 15 years, the risk of heart disease is that of a non-smoker.

It has been observed that the magnitude of tobacco use has increase drastically over the years, capturing every geographic location be it in urban, sub-urban or rural areas; the folks of any gender and age are prone to serious diseases from tobacco addiction. Tobacco not only affects the users but it also indirectly affects the non users (by inhaling the smoke of the users).

In Meghalaya 53.7% of men, 9.5% of women and 31.6% of all adults currently *smoke tobacco*. 11.6% of men, 29.1% of women and 20.3% of all adults currently consume *smokeless tobacco*. And, 59.8% of men, 34.2% of women and 47.0% of all adults either smoke tobacco and/ or use smokeless tobacco.

In India, East Khasi Hills (Meghalaya) has the highest relative proportion of cancer associated with use of tobacco with 70.4% and 46.5% of males and females respectively.

The data signifies a very alarming sign of the prevalence of tobacco consumption and the menace through it if the users are not concern enough to take a firm decision to just stop using tobacco.

Therefore, calling every individual user to reaffirm their commitment to quit the use of tobacco in any form, quitting can be challenging, especially for the ones who are captivated with the addiction to tobacco. However, if our commitment is strong, nothing can stop us because there are still a lot of reasons to quit. This theme assures to all users who really want to commit themselves to quitting.

Nevertheless, although the struggle is difficult, the only way to win over the battle is to win the individual's perception and the decision to stop should begin from personal level without any external coercion that I will seriously quit using tobacco to save myself and my dear and near ones.

Spread the Love not Smoke. Quit Tobacco not Life

Toll Free Tobacco Quitline: 1800-11-2356

Apps on Google Play Store: 1. QuitNow! Quit Smoking and 2. Quit Genius – Best way to quit smoking and vaping