

District Health Department #4

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February is American Heart Month

February is American Heart Month and includes the celebration of Valentine’s Day. These national observances present a great opportunity to celebrate love and to focus on heart health. Staying active, eating healthy, and living a tobacco-free life help to keep the heart healthy.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, it is important to know your risk for heart disease and stroke. Taking action to reduce your risk can start with the ABCS of heart health:

- **Aspirin:** Aspirin may help reduce your risk for heart disease and stroke. But do not take aspirin if you think you are having a stroke. It can make some types of stroke worse. Before taking aspirin, talk to your doctor about whether aspirin is right for you.
- **Blood pressure:** Control your blood pressure.
- **Cholesterol:** Manage your cholesterol.
- **Smoking:** Quit smoking, or don’t start.

Smoking cigarettes is a major cause of heart disease and stroke, causing 1 out of every 3 deaths from cardiovascular disease, and secondhand smoke exposure causes heart attack and stroke in nonsmokers.

“During February, we want to remind people that there are tools available to help with quitting smoking,” stated Joshua Meyerson, Medical Director for District Health Department No. 4. People on Medicaid can get any of the 7 quit smoking medications at no cost by visiting their health care provider and getting a prescription. “Talk to your health care provider or call the Michigan Tobacco Quitline today. Quitting tobacco use is the single best thing you can do for your health.”

The Michigan Tobacco Quitline that continues to provide anyone free telephone coaching and free nicotine replacement therapy to those who qualify. The Quitline provides services including materials, text messaging, and referral to all Michigan residents. New this year is an online, interactive coaching program option. The same program that is available on the phone can now be done online with the Quitline’s specially trained web coaches.

Contact the Quitline directly at 1-800-784-8669 (1-800-QUIT NOW), or enroll online at <https://michigan.quitlogix.org>.

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