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RESPIRATORY HEALTH ASSOCIATION℠ of Metropolitan Chicago

Catch Your Breath.®

Women & Cigarette Smoking

- Tobacco advertising to women began in the 1920's. Women have been targeted greatly, from creating special brands and types of cigarettes to incorporating themes of independence, weight control and desirability through advertisements that have attractive, thin and athletic models[1].

- Today, there is a much closer gap between men and women's smoking rates. Because of this, women share a much larger burden of smoking-related diseases than in the past.

- Cigarette smoking kills an estimated 178,000 women in the United States annually. Women smokers who die of a smoking-related disease lose on average 14.5 years of potential life[2].

- As smoking rates have declined overall in the U.S., the rates for women have not declined as quickly as the rates among men. Smoking rates have decreased by 30% among women since 1970 and 40% among men[5].

- Smoking accounts for 85-90% of lung cancer deaths and 90% of deaths due to COPD. Quitting smoking greatly reduces this risk[4].

- Smoking during pregnancy is associated with miscarriage, stillbirth, ectopic pregnancy, premature birth, and Sudden Infant Death Syndrome[4].

- Women and girls are more likely to smoke to control weight and negative emotions than men and boys[4].

- For women and men, a combination of counseling, social support and medication have been shown to be effective in treating tobacco dependence. Women, however, prefer different cessation methods than men. Women use more strategies, choose a more gradual cessation approach, are more likely to join cessation groups, and prefer cessation programs that offer social support. Some evidence suggests that nicotine replacement therapy may be less effective in women, but it is still effective and recommended for use[4].

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1 *Women and Smoking: A Report of the Surgeon General – 2001.*
2 CDC. Smoking attributable mortality, years of potential life lost, and economic costs – Unites States, 1995-1999. *MMWR* 2002; 51: 300-303.
3 American Legacy Foundation. *Women and Smoking Fact Sheet.*
4 National Women's Law Center and Oregon Health & Science University. *Women and Smoking: A National and State-by-State Report Card 2003.*

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