



***NOTE TO MEDIA:** Additional "Success Stories" and corresponding photos for different regions of New York State are available to read or download at the New York State Smokers' Quitline's Online News Room: <https://nysmokefree.com/newsroom>. Please reach out to us any time for interviews to enhance your coverage of New Year's resolutions and wellness stories. Tobacco cessation experts are available locally and online; clients may be available upon request.*

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### Media Contact

Tony Astran, MPA, APR, TTS (*he, him, his*)  
New York State Smokers' Quitline  
716-982-2088 (cell)  
[anthony.astran@roswellpark.org](mailto:anthony.astran@roswellpark.org)

## **FINGER LAKES RESIDENT ACHIEVES FREEDOM FROM SMOKING WITH SUPPORT FROM THE NYS SMOKERS' QUITLINE**

*Connie L. from Naples, N.Y. overcame nearly 25 years of cigarette smoking*



**NAPLES, N.Y. – Jan. 6, 2023** – Quitting smoking or vaping is challenging; however, people across New York State achieve lasting success every day with proper support. The **New York State Smokers' Quitline** (Quitline) celebrates those who pursue and maintain tobacco-free living and encourages those who smoke or vape to make a quit-attempt in 2023 – whether it's a first time or trying again. The Quitline reminds all New York State residents personalized support from trained tobacco treatment specialists and free resources are available seven days a week by calling 1-866-NY-QUITS (1-866-697-8487), texting QUITNOW to 333888 and visiting [nysmokefree.com](https://nysmokefree.com).

Connie L. (*pictured at center with her children*), age 46 of Naples, N.Y. in the Finger Lakes Region, vividly recalls the circumstances when she became a smoker at age 18. "I was enrolled in a very stressful drawing class and it seemed like everyone went outside for a cigarette during a break," she said. "I joined the crowd and got hooked. I never became a heavy smoker, but regularly had about four cigarettes a day from that moment on."

Connie suspended use of cigarettes during her mid-20s for the birth of her two children. Stressful situations, however, led her to resume smoking. As time passed, Connie tried becoming tobacco-free through a variety of methods but nothing seemed to work. She became a “closet sporadic smoker” while driving to and from work.

During the summer of 2021, Connie recognized she began to increase her cigarette intake when spending time outdoors with friends. She decided it was time to take serious steps to become a non-smoker.

“I called the Quitline, spoke with a specialist and received nicotine patches and nicotine gum at my doorstep a few days later,” Connie said. “The specialists checked in with me throughout my journey, which was so helpful. They also connected me with my healthcare insurance for additional support and because of that, I was able to receive an extra supply of nicotine patches.”

Connie became a non-smoker in August 2021 and continues to enjoy a multitude of health and financial benefits. She particularly enjoys hiking and no longer feels as winded during long excursions. Connie encourages everyone she knows to become tobacco-free.

“Your first attempt to quit will be hard, especially depending on how often and how long you smoked,” Connie advises. “You have to want to become tobacco-free for yourself. Use whatever resources you can find. The Quitline offers lots of helpful information, so start there! If I can do it, you can too.”

Most New York State adults are eligible to receive a free starter supply of nicotine replacement therapy (NRT) medications via mail, typically in the form of nicotine patches and often with supplemental nicotine gum or nicotine lozenges. When used appropriately and in combination, NRT medications can double or triple the odds of becoming and staying tobacco-free.

For those who prefer support via text, the Quitline reminds all New York State residents to try the new Learn2QuitNY six-week comprehensive program by enrolling at [nysmokefree.com](https://nysmokefree.com) or texting QUITNOW to 333888. The Quitline also recommends all tobacco and vape product users to visit the CDC’s “[Resolve to Be Smokefree in '23](#)” website, complete with tips, resources, links and app recommendations.

**The Quitline wishes everyone a happy, healthy and tobacco-free 2023.**

**About the New York State Smokers' Quitline**

The New York State Smokers' Quitline is a service of the New York State Department of Health and based at Roswell Park Comprehensive Cancer Center in Buffalo, N.Y. It is one of the first and busiest state quitlines in the nation and has responded to nearly 3 million calls since it began operating in 2000. The Quitline encourages tobacco and vape product users to talk with their healthcare professionals and access available Medicaid or health insurance benefits for medication support. All New York State residents can call **1-866-NY-QUITS** (1-866-697-8487) or text QUITNOW to 333888 for coaching and resources, free of charge, seven days a week beginning at 9 a.m. Visit [www.nysmokefree.com](http://www.nysmokefree.com) for more information.

**About Roswell Park Comprehensive Cancer Center**

Roswell Park Comprehensive Cancer Center is a community united by the drive to eliminate cancer's grip on humanity by unlocking its secrets through personalized approaches and unleashing the healing power of hope. Founded by Dr. Roswell Park in 1898, it is the only National Cancer Institute-designated comprehensive cancer center in Upstate New York. Learn more at [www.roswellpark.org](http://www.roswellpark.org), or contact us at 1-800-ROSWELL (1-800-767-9355) or [ASKRoswell@roswellpark.org](mailto:ASKRoswell@roswellpark.org).

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