



ATLANTA
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No Ifs, No Butts

You can scare people out of smoking, but the DeKalb County unit of the American Cancer Society doesn't want to.

Fear cures, it seems, are short term. Unless ex-smokers understand why they smoked and how behavioral modification can be used to control their urge, they soon return to their 20-pack for one more chorus of "You Light Up My Life."

To effect permanent cures, the DeKalb Unit established a Stop Smoking clinic. Classes are ongoing with at least one in progress any week. Each class meets twice a week for three weeks. Teachers, or "facilitators," are themselves ex-smokers. There is no charge to participants.

Curative steps include discussions of why one smokes, a 48-hour trial-quit period followed by discussion of that hiatus, visits by a physician and a person who has undergone removal of a cancerous larynx, and a final study of practical, day-by-day ways to fight the cigarette craving.

Such methods include the obvious—substituting celery or gum for a cigarette—and the not-so-obvious, such as altering daily routine so the link between that morning cup of coffee and the first drag of the day is broken.

Nationwide the percentage of adults who smoke is dropping, more rapidly in men than women. The rate of male teen smoking is holding steady; unfortunately the percentage of teenage girls who smoke is increasing.

In DeKalb success rates range from 20 per cent in some classes to 75 per cent in others. No follow-up study has been done among the 350 who've attended the classes to see how many have stayed off.

But the Cancer Society's DeKalb unit does offer these numbers for the statistical-minded: They estimate 80 per cent of all lung cancer and 98 per cent of all cancer of the larynx are caused by cigarette smoking. In the last 10 years the number of women dying from lung cancer has doubled, reflecting "new" women smokers from years past now entering the danger period for the disease.

For information on the Stop Smoking clinics, call 325-0550.

—J.M.R.

ACS - Clinic
Stop Smoking

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