



*NOTE TO MEDIA:* Our press releases are available in downloadable PDF format at our Online News Room: <https://nysmokefree.com/newsroom>. The webpage also includes an Experts Database with healthcare professionals and researchers from every region of New York State. Please contact us anytime to arrange an interview with any of our experts and/or our past Success Story participants.

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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- *New York State tobacco\* tax increase of \$1 more per pack starts September 1*
- *NY Quitline experienced increased call volume during previous tax increase*
- *Cost is a key factor in encouraging people to quit smoking*

## **TOBACCO EXCISE TAX INCREASE EXPECTED TO BOOST ATTEMPTS TO QUIT SMOKING**

*Increasing cost is a major factor for encouraging quit attempts; NY Quitline previously experienced uptick in calls during last tax increase in 2010*

**Aug. 3, 2023** – New York State residents seeking motivation to quit smoking will soon encounter a convincing reason. Beginning Sept. 1, 2023, the [excise tax](#) on cigarettes and little cigars will increase \$1 to a total of \$5.35 a pack, marking the first such increase since July 1, 2010. The [New York State Smokers' Quitline](#) (NY Quitline), a free and confidential service from the New York State Department of Health based at [Roswell Park Comprehensive Cancer Center](#) in Buffalo, N.Y., anticipates an uptick in program participants due to the latest tax increase.

"The upcoming tax increase will help save lives," said Paula Celestino, director of client relations and outreach for the NY Quitline, and one of the program's founding team members. "We want to remind all New York State residents the Quitline is here to provide free support, seven days a week. We know quitting smoking is hard, but [thousands of people have been successful](#). The key is to keep trying."

Cost plays a major factor in encouraging people who smoke to make a quit attempt. Most people who smoke want to quit, and an increase in the cost of cigarettes can motivate people to become and stay tobacco-free. When the tobacco excise tax increased from \$2.75 a pack to \$4.35 a pack on July 1, 2010, the NY Quitline experienced an increase in calls for three consecutive months. Currently, according to the NY Quitline's online [Savings Calculator](#), a New York State resident will spend a minimum of \$4,000 a year to smoke a pack a cigarettes a day.

"We know that raising the price of cigarettes deters youth smoking and motivates more adults to quit," added Celestino. "[Research shows](#) state tax increases have a dramatic effect in spurring quit attempts."

For the 2023 tax increase, the NY Quitline again expects more people requesting help to quit. Unlike 2010 during the prior tax increase, however, Quitline participants now have even more support services from which to choose. Trained tobacco treatment specialists continue to provide quit coaching and access to free nicotine replacement therapy (NRT) medications via phone at **1-866-NY-QUITS** (1-866-697-8487). At [nysmokefree.com](http://nysmokefree.com), participants can connect with a specialist through an online chat, request a call-back, [order free NRT medications](#), and register for the six-week [Learn2QuitNY](#) text messaging program.

No matter the methods one uses to quit smoking, cost-savings often plays a major role in the process. Past Quitline participants frequently note cost as a reason to quit (see: [Jackie O.'s story](#)) and savings as a reason to maintain tobacco-free living (see: [Betty E.'s story](#) and [Debby L.'s story](#)).

*\* The term tobacco throughout this press release refers to the use of manufactured, combustible commercial products and vape products – not the sacred, medicinal and traditional use of tobacco by Native American nations and other indigenous groups.*

### **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 those who use commercial tobacco and vape products 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**

From the world's first chemotherapy research to the PSA prostate cancer biomarker, Roswell Park Comprehensive Cancer Center generates innovations that shape how cancer is detected, treated and prevented worldwide. Driven to eliminate cancer's grip on humanity, the Roswell Park team of 4,000 makes compassionate, patient-centered cancer care and services accessible across New York State and beyond. Founded in 1898, Roswell Park was among the first three cancer centers nationwide to become a National Cancer Institute-designated comprehensive cancer center and is the only one to hold this designation in Upstate New York. To learn more about Roswell Park Comprehensive Cancer Center and the Roswell Park Care Network, visit [www.roswellpark.org](http://www.roswellpark.org), call 1-800-ROSWELL (1-800-767-9355) or email [ASKRoswell@RoswellPark.org](mailto:ASKRoswell@RoswellPark.org).

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