

11 million work days lost to smoking each year

October 3 2014



Health experts have [warned](#) that 11 million work days are lost each year as a result of sick days linked to smoking.

The announcement comes as over 200,000 smokers sign up to take part in Stoptober – the annual mass quit challenge encouraging people to kick the habit for the whole of October.

Stopping [smoking](#) for 28 days makes you five times more likely to stay

smoke free for good.

And according to Cancer Research UK's health information officer, Nicola Smith, successful quitters will gain back up to of 10 years of life.

"Quitting smoking is the most important thing you can do for your health. It isn't always easy but we know getting support is a key ingredient to improve your chances of success," she said.

"There's fantastic free support available from our NHS gold-standard Stop Smoking Services year round and Stoptober is a great time to give quitting a go. So join the challenge now for a healthier and wealthier future."

Figures released by Action on Smoking and Health (ASH) also highlight the economic burden smoking has on the country.

Each year in England smoking costs the country around £13 billion, with a £1 billion bill left at the door of businesses due to work days lost to smoking-related sickness.

Public [health](#) officials backed the importance of taking part in Stoptober and quitting for good, highlighting how businesses can help their employees.

Professor Kevin Fenton, National Director of Health and Wellbeing at Public Health England, said: "The figures speak for themselves – businesses can play an important role in helping their employees and see the benefits of a smoke free workforce.

"There are still 8 million smokers in England and two thirds saying they want to quit. Stoptober provides the perfect opportunity for employers and staff to work together towards [quitting smoking](#) for good."

The 28-day mass [stop smoking](#) challenge offers a range of free support including an app, [website](#) , email and text service and support on social media.

Last year nearly a quarter of a million people in England and Wales signed up to Stoptober.

Provided by Cancer Research UK

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