



HEALTH
KwaZulu-Natal

Natalia, 330 Langalibalele Street, Pietermaritzburg, 3201
Private Bag X 9051, Pietermaritzburg, 342 0429
Email.:mbali.thusi@kznhealth.gov.za
www.kznhealth.gov.za

TO: ALL MEDIA

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WORLD NO TOBACCO DAY

The month of May is "Anti-tobacco campaign month" and this month is dedicated to creating awareness about health risks associated with tobacco use. The campaign will end on 31 May, which is World No Tobacco Day.

Tobacco is the second major cause of death in the world hence much emphasis is put on educating people about the health hazards and diseases that tobacco use causes.

The Provincial Department of Health will on Saturday, 27 May 2006 have "World No Tobacco Day" event. The event will be held in Lambert Park, Escourt at 10h00. The media is invited to attend this event.

FACTS ABOUT TOBACCO SMOKE

According to the World Health Organisation tobacco is currently responsible for the death of one in ten adults worldwide, which accounts for about 5 million deaths each year. If the current smoking patterns continue, it will cause some 10 million deaths each year by year 2020.

*Tobacco smoke contains over 4000 chemicals and 45 known cancer causing substances, which include Nicotine, Carbon Monoxide, Tar, and others include Cyanide, formaldehyde, methanol, ammonia, nitrous oxide, acetone, arsenic, naphthalene and butane to name but a few.

WHY SMOKING IS A HEALTH RISK

*Smoking increases the risk of heart disease by 2-3 times

*It is directly responsible for the death of half of its lifelong users

*It doubles the risk of heart disease two fold if you smoke heavily, have high blood pressure or high blood cholesterol

*Increases the risk of heart disease 10 times if you are a woman on the contraceptive pill.

*Doubles the risk of stroke

*It affects the arteries in the arms and legs increasing the risk of gangrene by over 5 times

*Contributes to about one third of cancers and many lung diseases.

*Non-smokers who inhale second hand smoke also suffer many of the diseases of active smoking.

*Babies born to mothers who smoked or are exposed to second hand smoke whilst pregnant are more likely to be underweight, premature or stillborn

There is no safe level of smoking. The most important step for smokers is to quit smoking. Healthcare workers at clinics and in hospitals are there to provide advice to smokers who want to quit the smoking.

ENDS

For more information please contact Mr. Leon Mbangwa on 083 459 8695.