

Smokers can swap cigarettes for lunch during Smokeout



Thursday is the 34th annual Great American Smokeout Challenge, which challenges smokers to go a day without tobacco and perhaps quit the habit altogether.

By [MARY SHEDDEN](#) | The Tampa Tribune

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TAMPA - Going cold turkey has new meaning.

Thursday is the 34th annual Great American Smokeout Challenge, which challenges smokers to go a day without tobacco and perhaps quit the habit altogether. Schools, businesses and health advocacy groups across the country have planned activities hoping to make the day as smoke free as possible.

Hillsborough County's Tobacco Free Partnership and local Honey Baked Ham Co. stores are challenging local residents to turn in their cigarettes in exchange for a coupon good for a "cold turkey" sandwich. They'll also get a survival kit with smoking cessation educational information.

On Thursday, cigarettes can be exchanged for sandwich coupons at the following locations:

- Hillsborough County Center lobby, 601 E. Kennedy Blvd., Tampa, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.
- Brandon Regional Hospital cafeteria, 119 Oakfield Drive, Brandon, 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.
- The Centre for Women lobby, 305 S. Hyde Park Ave, Tampa, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.
- University of South Florida Health College of Nursing rotunda, 4202 E. Fowler Ave., Tampa, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

A similar anti-smoking program is being promoted this month Wellspring Oncology, 6600 66th St. N., Pinellas Park. The first 50 people who relinquish their cigarettes will get a \$5 gift card to Publix and will be eligible for a grand prize if they abstain from tobacco for the whole month. That program already is underway.

The American Cancer Society, sponsor of the Smokeout Challenge, reports that about a million people a year abstain from smoking during the challenge. However, tobacco use remains the single largest preventable cause of disease and premature death in the United States, killing 443,000 people a year.

For information about quitting smoking, call the Florida Quitline at (877) 822-6669, or visit www.floridaquitline.com.

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