

ONEIDA COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

Adirondack Bank Building, 5th Floor, 185 Genesee St., Utica, NY 13501

ANTHONY J. PICENTE, JR.
ONEIDA COUNTY EXECUTIVE



PHYLLIS D. ELLIS, BSN, MS, F.A.C.H.E.
DIRECTOR OF HEALTH

ADMINISTRATION

Phone: (315) 798-6400 ☎ Fax: (315) 266-6138 ☎ Email: publichealth@ocgov.net

February 7, 2019

For Immediate Release

Contact: Regina Bulman 315.266.7049

Love Your Heart: Quit Smoking **Oneida County Health Department Offers Free Classes**

February is American Heart Month, and the Oneida County Health Department is reminding residents not to overlook an important contributor to coronary disease, heart attack and stroke: **tobacco smoke**.

OCHD offers free quit smoking classes to any county resident who signs up in advance. The classes are offered in partnership with Mohawk Valley Health Systems (MVHS), Rome Memorial Hospital and Mohawk Valley Community College's Respiratory Therapy Program and run in a series of three sessions. The next session is taking place March 6, 13 and 20, 2019 at MVHS, St. Elizabeth Campus.

"Managing cholesterol, controlling blood pressure, maintaining a healthy weight and regularly exercising we know are key to a healthy heart," said Oneida County Executive Anthony J. Picente Jr. "But equally important to cardiovascular health is to quit smoking or, ideally, don't start at all."

Smoking is a major cause of cardiovascular, as well as many other, chronic diseases. According to the American Heart Association, one-third of deaths from Coronary Heart Disease (CHD) can be attributed to smoke and second-hand smoke. Smokers are two to four times more likely to develop CHD than nonsmokers and two to three times more likely to die from it.

"The good news is the health benefits of quitting smoking are immediate and lasting," said Oneida County Director of Health, Phyllis D. Ellis. "Whether it's your first quit attempt, or you need help sticking to that New Year's resolution, I encourage any resident to reach out for assistance. The additional motivation that comes from this type of support and the benefit that comes from quitting is literally life changing."

The classes provide group motivation, guided support, education and information about quit methods and resource information.

Residents can sign up for quit smoking classes by reaching the Oneida County Health Department at 798-6400. For additional assistance, residents can reach out to the NYS Department of Health Smokers Quitline at 1-866-NY-QUITS (1-866-697-8487).

-30-

Media Advisory

The Oneida County Health Department, in partnership with the Utica City Football Club (UCFC) and Planet Fitness, will sponsor a **Love Your Heart** information table at the Sunday, February 10th 2 p.m. UCFC game at the Adirondack Bank Center. Game goers can stop by for important information about heart health and get a chance to win a Planet Fitness annual membership.