



the Almanac

"I have not yet begun to fight!" USS BONHOMME RICHARD LHD 6

February 22, 2012

Smoking: A Mission to Quit



HM1(SW/FMF) Tospol Hutasangkas, Smoking Cessation program manager

"Anyone can quit smoking but you first need a game plan before you start."

**Story and photos by
MC2(AW) Frank Andrews**

"The medications don't have anything to do with it. If anything, it's a temporary fix. That's why a lot of people end up having to do the program again because they weren't mentally prepared and they didn't have a good support system during and after they completed the four week program," said Hospital Corpsman 1st Class Tospol Hutasangkas, ship's smoking cessation program manager on USS Bonhomme Richard (LHD 6).

Any day is a day to better ourselves both professionally and personally. While at sea, we form routines that we repeat day after day. For the smoker, this is the ideal setting to break off old habits and form new patterns of behavior.

Where do I start?

Schedule a visit with HM1 Hutasangkas and he will sit down with you and help you develop a game plan. Each specific plan is tailored for the individual and is based on a person's triggers, daily routine, and the amount they smoke.

"I don't give them the medication the first day. I ask them, Why do you want to quit? I tell them to use that energy to try and focus on something else that will pull them away from that quick fix. If you go and take a smoke break the problem is going to still be there. You haven't addressed the problem. Your life is more important now than to give it up to that quick fix cigarette," said Hutasangkas.

According to Hutasangkas, medications, nicotine patches and gum only help to manage withdraw symptoms.

"I'm not going to give them the medication the first week. They have to show me that they're prepared to quit, they have to show progression. They don't have to quit what they're doing but they do have to show progression



FC2(SW) Amandie Laurens, C5I Department / CW Division

"It takes a lot of will power and it's really hard. You have to want to become a non-smoker to succeed. I had to realize why I did smoke and find ways to deal with it."

over a two to three week period and then I'll decide," said Hutasangkas.

Relieve the anxiety

"Physical exercise is a good way of relieving stress. Maybe even meditation or some type of yoga, stretching, eating lots of nutritious foods and even confiding in one of your coworkers are the best stress reliefs. They know what you're going through. They're able to talk you out of a situation," said Hutasangkas.

Identify the triggers

"Stay away from triggers like caffeine, the smoke deck and people that smoke. Let your friends and coworkers know that you are trying to quit. Ask them for their support. Typically that helps. If everyone else gets on that bandwagon it's a better healthier lifestyle," said Hutasangkas. (continued...)

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To better your chances of beating the habit, cut back on greasy food and eat more foods that make you feel better such as fruits and vegetables.

“If you eat healthy you’re getting your mind prepared for a healthy lifestyle because that is the ultimate goal of anybody that wants to stop smoking. When you start eating healthy you start to have

a healthy lifestyle. So eating healthy and exercise is all part of your goal to stop smoking. So typically people that get in that mind set, it’s a lot easier for them to stop smoking,” said Hutasangkas.

Support System

Fire Controlman 2nd Class Amandie Laurens is just one of many success stories on BHR. It has been almost two months since her last smoke and she says those around her helped the most.

“I had great moral support. My coworkers, friends and family all encouraged me daily,” said Laurens. “I also used the tobacco cessation program. HM1 hooked me up with some nicotine patches, which helped me not want cigarettes and once I was out of the habit of going to the smoke deck it





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