

# ARBenefits News Monthly



Issue 33

November 2016

## Great American Smokeout



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The EBD Office Will be Closed

Friday, November 11  
(Veteran's Day)

Thursday, November 24  
&  
Friday, November 25  
(Thanksgiving)



About 40 million Americans still smoke cigarettes, and tobacco use remains the single largest preventable cause of disease and premature death in the world. While cigarette smoking rates have dropped (from 42% in 1965 to 17% in 2014), cigar, pipe, and hookah – other dangerous and addictive ways to smoke tobacco – are very much on the rise. Smoking kills people – there's no "safe" way to smoke tobacco.

Quitting smoking has immediate and long-term benefits at any age. Quitting is hard, but you can increase your chances of success with help. Getting help through counseling or medications can double or triple the chances of quitting successfully.

The benefits of quitting smoking begin almost immediately, and increase with time.

**20 minutes after quitting:** Your heart rate and blood pressure begin to drop.

**12 hours after quitting:** The carbon monoxide level in your blood drops to normal.

**2 weeks to 3 months after quitting:** Your circulation improves, and your lung function increases.

**1 to 9 months after quitting:** Coughing and shortness of breath decrease; cilia (tiny, hair-like structures in the lungs) regain normal function, increasing the ability to handle mucus, clean the lungs, and reduce the risk of infection.

**1 year after quitting:** The excess risk of coronary heart disease is half that of a smoker's.

**5 years after quitting:** Risks of cancer of the mouth, throat, esophagus, and bladder are cut in half. Cervical cancer risk falls to that of a non-smoker. Stroke risk can fall to that of a non-smoker after 2 to 5 years.

**10 years after quitting:** The lung cancer death rate is about half that of a smoker. The risks of cancer of the larynx and pancreas decrease.

**15 years after quitting:** The risk of coronary heart disease is that of a non-smoker's.

Quitting smoking can be difficult, but you can increase your chances of success with help.

Resources are available to you including through your EAP provider, GuidanceResources®, who offers a Tobacco Cessation Program at no extra

cost to the member. The program offers:

- \* One-on-One telephonic counseling
- \* A customized assistance plan
- \* Helpful ideas & resources
- \* Behavior Modification Techniques
- \* Strategies to help you quit smoking permanently

Those who participate in the Tobacco Cessation Program can receive nicotine replacement patches, Bupropion or Chantix at no cost if enrolled and approved by the program.

To enroll in the Tobacco Cessation Program, contact Member Services at 877-815-1017 x1.

### Resources:

American Cancer Society

[www.cancer.org](http://www.cancer.org)

GuidanceResources®

[www.guidanceresources.com](http://www.guidanceresources.com)

## EBD Retiree Day

EBD will be hosting a retiree day on Thursday, November 17 at our office in Little Rock. Employees considering retirement and current retirees are welcome to attend. The event will be from 10 a.m. – 2 p.m. in the EBD Board Room.

Vendors, EBD staff and others will be on hand to answer questions from employees and retirees. Attendees are not required to stay the whole time, and can leave once you have all of your questions or concerns answered.

Registration is not required to attend the event.

### EBD Office

501 Woodlane

Little Rock, AR 72201

Suite 500 – 5th Floor.

### Retiree Day Representatives

- \* EBD Retirement Specialists
- \* ATRS
- \* APERS
- \* H&H Employee Benefits Specialists
- \* Securian (Minnesota Life)

## Bariatric Surgery Program

Enrollment into the Bariatric Surgery Pilot Program will resume on January 3, 2017.

Each year the Arkansas State Legislature gives the plan a set amount of funds that go towards fighting obesity. Those funds are split between the ASE and PSE plans.

For 2017, The Arkansas State Employee (ASE) and Public School Employee (PSE) groups will each have 125 spots available for the program.

For members accepted into the program, ARBenefits will provide coverage for bariatric surgery to include:

- A) Gastric bypass surgery
- B) Adjustable gastric banding surgery
- C) Sleeve gastrectomy surgery
- D) Duodenal switch biliopancreatic diversion

The Arkansas State and Public School Life and Health Insurance board must approve additional procedures. The surgical procedure must be pre-certified by your surgeon and

supported as medically necessary by your primary care physician prior to surgery.

### The eligibility criteria is as follows:

1. Only Arkansas State and Public School Employees, ages 25-55, with a BMI greater than 35 (with a co-morbid condition) or 40 (without a co-morbid condition) will be considered for bariatric surgery (no dependents or spouses). If the BMI is between 35-40, candidates must have co-morbid conditions, such as cardiopulmonary disease, sleep apnea, hypertension or diabetes.
2. New for 2017, all members enrolling in the Bariatric Surgery Program will be required to consult with a nurse coach. (If you are followed by your physician for, or are on medications to treat a condition, you must enroll in a Disease Management Program.)
3. The Employee under the plan must have been a plan participant for a minimum of one plan year prior to enrollment in the bariatric program.

A full list of participation criteria can be found on ARBenefits.org along with a link for frequently asked questions. Just click on Resources and Links in the Health Enhancement section of the EBD homepage.

Please note that this program will only cover the first Bariatric procedure per lifetime. (Employees who have had previous bariatric procedures are ineligible.)

Any requirements are subject to change. Members must call EBD at 501-682-9656 or 1-877-815-1017 to enroll.

With only a set amount of funds available, enrollment into the program will cease once funds are exhausted.

**Members who were previously enrolled and want to enroll again will be able to starting March 15, 2017, if there are any openings still available.**

ARBenefits complies with applicable Federal civil rights laws and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, or sex. Language assistance services, free of charge, are available to you. Call 1-877-815-1017x1.

Si habla español, tiene a su disposición servicios gratuitos de asistencia lingüística. Llame al 1-877-815-1017x1