

## FROM THE PARISH NURSE

### THE TRUE COSTS OF SMOKING

Smoking may be hazardous to your health and your finances. At the age of 15, I started to smoke because all the older girls who worked in the nursing home smoked. STUPID move on my part. Nicotine is addictive and yes, I became addicted. In 1958 I could buy a pack of cigarettes for \$.40 cents. Today a pack cost \$6.28, which means a pack a day habit sets you back \$188/month or \$2,292 per year. Ten years of smoking comes with a \$22,920.00 price tag.

At age 50 the lightbulb went off in my brain. Despite the fact I had taken care of people with COPD on O<sub>2</sub>; visualized the black lung of an addictive smoker; cared for people with tracheostomies; I had continued to smoke. The lightbulb went off and I finally saw the disgruntled faces of patients who did not like the smell of smoke. How could I do this to people, especially sick people. AND so, after several attempts to quit I did it!

I have not smoked a cigarette for over 26 years and I am very grateful that I quit. Cigarette smoking is one of the most difficult habits to quit. It can be done!

This week I have had 5 college sophomores from Kent university staying with me. When I mentioned I was writing an article on smoking they informed me that young teens are now getting addicted to vaping, also called juuling. Juuling is becoming more popular with youth in middle and high school. Vaping means using an electronic cigarette or e-cigarette. It is a handheld battery powered vaporizer that stimulates smoking by providing some of the behavioral aspects of smoking, but without burning tobacco.

No matter how one inhales nicotine, it will increase heart rate and blood pressure. Research proves if one decides to quit smoking they will. As I said previously, "THE HABIT OF SMOKING IS VERY DIFFICULT TO QUIT" BUT it can be done. To protect your health and finances PLEASE schedule an appointment with Marion and together we will work out a plan to help you QUIT. 304-615-2119(cell).