



WEBSitings

Brief profiles of useful websites and online resources



My Family Health Portrait

There are diseases that can't be seen coming, but there are diseases that can be screened for, if only we knew what we were looking to find. Thankfully, a family history can help, particularly if it is together in an easily retrievable location. Understanding the critical importance of family history on personal health, the Office of the Surgeon General created My Family Health Portrait (<https://familyhistory.hhs.gov>), a website that captures a patient's detailed family history in one shot.

After answering a series of questions, such as how many sisters and brothers the user's parents have and filling out the health conditions the user knows about for these family members, a "View Diagram and Table" button appears. This diagram is the user's family tree, also available for easy review with a physician in a table format. Both formats display a snapshot, or portrait, of the patient's family health history, and both can be printed or accessed and edited electronically.

Because this information is hosted securely on the Internet, users can re-

turn freely to update their family record as it becomes available (eg, if a family member dies or is newly diagnosed with an illness).

Quit and Stay Quit

Smoking is addictive. Smoking is expensive. Whether a smoker is trying to or has already quit, resources available at <http://www.ucanquit2.org> can help.

The section How to Quit includes resources on the 4 steps of quitting, as well as a page that is stocked with helpful articles, including "Chemicals Contained in a Cigarette" and "The Effects of Tobacco on Your Mouth." If the accumulated cost of smoking is a motivator for quitting, users can access a savings calculator, which displays compelling savings amounts at 6 months, 1 year, 5 years, and 10 years.

Within the Stay Quit section, users will find available pages on learning how to cope and handle difficult situations without relying on cigarette smoking. Help Your Hero Quit includes an abundance of printable and customizable documents geared toward health professionals or families and friends.

And if a user idles on the site for too long, the session is interrupted by a helpful popup chat request.

Users can sign up for the program SmokeFreeMil, which provides 24/7 text message support before, during, and after the smoker has quit. This program is available by text messaging "MIL" to 47848 or by filling out a form at <http://www.ucanquit2.org/HowToQuit/SmokeFreeMil.aspx>.

ChooseMyPlate

Knowing how to put together a healthy plate of food may not be as easy as it sounds, particularly when shopping or dining on a budget or when the options available are limited. Created by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, ChooseMyPlate, accessible at <http://www.ChooseMyPlate.gov>, was designed exactly with its busy, hurried visitors in mind—a single place that discusses different types of foods comprising the food pyramid as well as tips on how to shop at the grocery store or eat out at a restaurant.

Users can access the SuperTracker, which helps in planning, analyzing, and tracking diet and physical activity. Other tools include daily food plans and food plan worksheets, a body mass index calculator, and a quiz called "Portion Distortion" where users are confronted by scaled images of food available today compared with the same food in its smaller size available decades ago.

ChooseMyPlate offers nutritional information for users from preschool-aged children to older adults, covering college-bound, pregnant, and overweight adults in between. Free materials, such as the 10 Tips Nutrition Education Series and numerous other documents in Spanish, are available for immediate download. ●