



Press release
For immediate release

WITH THE QUIT TO WIN! CHALLENGE, THIS TIME IT'S FOR GOOD

Registration is open until February 6 at quitchallenge.ca

Montréal, January 3, 2017 – The *Quit to Win! Challenge* is back for its 18th edition to support Quebec smokers who want to quit. By signing up, participants commit to not smoking for 6 weeks, from February 6 to March 19, 2017, receive free support, and stand the chance to win a trip for two to a sun destination. Additionally, not smoking for 6 weeks increases the chances of quitting for good by 6!¹ Smokers who want to butt out can sign up now at quitchallenge.ca.

“Smoking is more than just a habit, it’s a nicotine addiction. Quitting smoking is difficult and involves overcoming both a physical and a psychological dependence that can cause a variety of withdrawal symptoms, at the root of the majority of relapses. It’s not surprising then that on average smokers try quitting 4 times before succeeding.² But with an approach that works like the *Challenge*, this time it can be for good for many smokers,” explains Dr. Christiane Laberge, campaign spokesperson.

In Quebec, there are still nearly 1.5 million smokers, but more than 60% of them want to quit smoking.³ Lucie Charlebois, Minister for Rehabilitation, Youth Protection, Public Health and Healthy Living, states: “With the government’s new preventive health policy, one of our objectives is to reduce the number of smokers to 10% of the population by 2025. Proven and effective smoking cessation assistance approaches like the *Quit to Win! Challenge* are essential to our fight against smoking. I invite smokers who want to quit to take up the *Challenge* in large numbers. They have everything to gain!”

Increased chances of success with the *Challenge*

- The *Quit to Win! Challenge* is an approach that works: since 2000, on average 2 out of 3 participants have successfully stopped smoking for 6 weeks, which represents over 250,000 people.⁴
- Signing up and committing to not smoking for 6 weeks (42 days), a realistic first objective, in addition to the free support provided and the motivation of quitting at the same time as thousands of other Quebecers, is an important success factor for a great number of participants.
- According to experts,⁵ the longer a smoker succeeds in not lighting up, the greater the chances of becoming an ex-smoker. We estimate that *Challenge* participants who do not smoke for 6 weeks increase their chances of quitting for good by 6.

Free support and prizes to win

- Participants have access to several free resources and support tools such as a personal online profile at quitchallenge.ca, encouragement emails, the Jean Coutu Quit Kit, the SOS Challenge app, the Facebook community, the iQuitnow helpline (1 866 527-7383), and Quit Smoking Centres.
- They are also eligible to win one of 2 trips to Cuba, courtesy of Air Transat and the Melia Peninsula Varadero hotel, or one of 5 Jean Coutu gift cards, a value of \$100 each.

1. West, R. & Stapleton, J. (2008). Clinical and public health significance of treatments to aid smoking cessation. *European Respiratory Review*, 17 (110), 199-204. Retrieved on December 8, 2016 from <http://err.ersjournals.com/content/17/110/199>.

2. Ben Amar, M. & Légaré N. (2006). *Le tabac à l'aube du 21^e siècle : mise à jour des connaissances*, Quebec Addiction Prevention Centre, p. 65.

3. Léger Marketing (2010). *Étude sur les fumeurs au Québec : portrait et stratégies*, Presented to the Canadian Cancer Society, Report 14380-010, 72 p.

4. Soulard, E. & Leane, V. (2012). *Rapport provincial - 10 ans de Défi J'arrête, j'y gagne ! Bilan de la participation et de la cessation*. Direction de santé publique, Agence de la santé et des services sociaux.

5. R. West, J. Stapleton, *Op. cit.*

About the *Quit to Win! Challenge*

The *Quit to Win! Challenge* is a province-wide campaign that provides free support to smokers who want to quit. Created in 2000, this initiative of Capsana is in partnership with several public and private organizations, including the *ministère de la Santé et des Services Sociaux*, Quebec's *Directions régionales de santé publique*, the Canadian Cancer Society, the Jean Coutu Group, and GlaxoSmithKline Consumer Healthcare. To find out more, visit quitchallenge.ca.

About Capsana

Capsana is a social enterprise owned by the ÉPIC Foundation, which is associated with the Montreal Heart Institute, and the Fondation PSI. Its mission is to help individuals take an active role in their health. To find out more, visit capsana.ca.

- 30 -

Source:

quitchallenge.ca | facebook.com/defitabac
capsana.ca | [@equipeCapsana](https://twitter.com/equipeCapsana)

Information and interview requests:

Marie-Noël Phaneuf
Annexe Communications
514-844-8864, ext. 211
mnphaneuf@annexcommunications.com