

SMOKED OUT



Smoking continues to take a devastating toll on the American public. While there has been a decline through tobacco taxes and smoking bans, the adult smoking rate has stalled at about 20 percent in recent years. Secretary of Health and Human Resources Kathleen Sebelius, said, "When we look back on just a few decades to the days of smoking on airplanes and elevators, it can be easy to focus on how far we've come". However, the hard truth is that the adult smoking rate hasn't really budged since 2003. The government is now, in a graphic nationwide campaign aiming to shock smokers into quitting. In the sometimes-gruesome stories of people damaged by tobacco products, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention is pushing its first and by far it's largest, at \$54 million, national advertising campaign. The spots, which begin Monday and will air for at least 12 weeks, will hopefully persuade as many as 50,000 Americans to stop smoking. The campaign, consisting of billboards and print, radio and TV ads, show people whose smoking resulted in heart surgery, a tracheotomy, lost limbs or paralysis. Earlier research that aggressive anti-smoking campaigns using hard-hitting images sometimes led to decreases in smoking is now being applied to jolt a weary public that has been listening to government warnings about the dangers of smoking for nearly 50 years. "There is an urgent need for this media campaign," Matthew Myers, president of the Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids, said in a statement. One of the print ads featuring Shawn Wright from Washington state shows the 50-year-old shaving, his razor moving down toward a red gaping hole at the base of his neck that he uses to speak and breathe. Shawn Wright had a tracheotomy after being diagnosed with head and neck cancer four years ago. The advertising firm, Arnold Worldwide, found Wright and about a dozen others who developed cancer or other health problems after smoking for the ads. CDC Director Dr. Thomas Frieden said in a telephone interview, "This is incredibly important. It's not every day we release something that will save thousands of lives". Federal health agencies have gradually embraced graphic anti-smoking imagery, and last year Food and Drug Administration approved nine images to be displayed on cigarette packages. Experts say that previous waves of anti-smoking ads have been hugely successful, including those that aired in the late 1960s and the American Legacy Foundation's "Truth" ads from the early 2000s. Glenn Leshner, a University of Missouri researcher who has studied the effectiveness of anti-smoking ads, says the idea is to create an image so striking that smokers and would-be smokers will think of it whenever they have an urge to buy a pack of cigarettes. However, he also found that some ads are so disturbing that people reacted by turning away from the message rather than listening. The ads would need to shock viewers into paying attention while encouraging people that quitting is possible, he said. The CDC campaign includes information on a national quit line and offers advice on how to kick the habit, CDC officials said. Where can you find the most Advertising jobs? [Click here.](#)

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