

## Press Release Template

For Immediate Release

Month XX, 20XX

Contact: XX

(XXX) XXX-XXXX

### **[Insert Organization/Department & Base Name] Promoting CDC's *Tips From Former Smokers*<sup>®</sup> campaign for [INSERT EVENT/OBSERVANCE]**

*[Insert organization/department & Base Name] aim to raise awareness about the risks of tobacco use among active duty Service members and veterans.*

[CITY], [STATE], [MONTH, DAY], 2020 – [Insert organization/department & base name] are raising awareness about the high prevalence of tobacco use, including cigarette smoking, among active duty Service members and veterans. This [INSERT EVENT/OBSERVANCE], join us in promoting resources from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) national tobacco education campaign, *Tips From Former Smokers*<sup>®</sup> (*Tips*<sup>®</sup>).

Since 2012, the *Tips* campaign has profiled real people who are living with serious long-term health effects from cigarette smoking and secondhand smoke exposure. Cigarette smoking increases the risk of lung cancer, heart disease, chronic bronchitis, and many other diseases.

Tobacco use is the leading cause of preventable disease, disability, and death in the United States. Currently, active duty Service members and veterans are more likely than civilians to use tobacco products. Many Service members start using tobacco after they enter military service.

As [INSERT EVENT/OBSERVANCE] approaches, [insert organization/base name] are focusing the on the health consequences of cigarette smoking and tobacco use on active duty Service members, veterans, and their families.

#### **The *Tips* campaign includes first-hand stories from veterans who suffer from smoking-related conditions and diseases:**

- **Brian H.**, age 65, joined the U.S. Air Force at age 19. Although he enjoyed his military service, he struggled with stress and often smoked to cope. Since his first heart attack at age 35, Brian has been diagnosed with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease and has had bypass surgery, a heart transplant, lung cancer, and part of his lung removed due to smoking. Brian quit smoking at age 55 to be eligible for a heart transplant.
- **James F.**, age 48, was in the U.S. Army. He began smoking at age 14. He quit after 30 years of smoking to reduce his risk for health problems.
- **Mark A.**, age 47, served in the U.S. Air Force and smoked until 2009, when he developed rectal cancer at age 42.
- **Roosevelt S.**, age 51, started experimenting with cigarettes in his teens, but his addiction became entrenched during his time in the U.S. Navy. At age 45, he had a heart attack and later needed six bypass surgeries to repair the damage to his heart caused by smoking. He has been smoke-free since age 48.

- [Beatrice R.](#), age 40, formerly served in the U.S. Navy. She began smoking at age 13. A mother of two, she quit smoking in 2010 because she wanted to be around for her family.

“These impactful stories from active duty Service members and veterans demonstrate the negative health consequences real people can suffer from smoking,” [\[Insert Name/Title of department spokesperson\]](#). “We’re grateful to have those who have bravely served our country and are now courageously sharing their stories to help protect others who may face similar struggles.”

During 2010–2015, more than 1 in 5 (21.6%) veterans in the United States reported being current cigarette smokers, according to CDC [research](#). In 2018, 14.6% of veterans enrolled for care in the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Health Care System reported being a current cigarette smoker.

[\[Insert Military Representative Quote\]](#)

Cigarette smoking remains the leading cause of preventable disease, disability, and death in the United States. Cigarette smoking kills more than 480,000 Americans each year. Smoking harms nearly every organ in the body. For every person who dies because of smoking, at least 30 people live with a serious smoking-related illness.

If you are an active duty Service member or retiree, you and your family may be able to access tobacco cessation counseling, cessation medicines, and other services through your TRICARE coverage. Veterans enrolled in the VA Health Care System have access to VA resources and services to help them quit, including tobacco cessation medications and counseling. There are also resources available in your local area, including your state quitline, which you can reach by calling 1-800-QUIT-NOW.

For more information, visit [CDC.gov/TipsMilitary](https://www.cdc.gov/TipsMilitary).

For more information on the *Tips* campaign, including profiles of the former smokers in the ads, other campaign resources, and links to the ads, visit [CDC.gov/Tips](https://www.cdc.gov/Tips).

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[\[Insert organization/department/base boilerplates\]](#)