

901 Smokes Out Washington: Quit or Get Out 25 feet

BY JESSICA RONGITSCH, M.D.
Pike Place Market Clinic

In light of the recent victory of Initiative 901, or Seattle's smoking ban, I decided to reissue this article



on smoking cessation. I was a third-year medical student on an oncology elective following around a gray-haired oncologist on his daily

hospital rounds and clinic visits. One day, a woman in her forties came in with her husband, carrying thick envelope of chest films. She was from a rural community, a mother of two teenage children, and she had been a smoker since her teens. She said she had always intended to quit, but the stress of her job, raising children, and financial difficulties caused her to

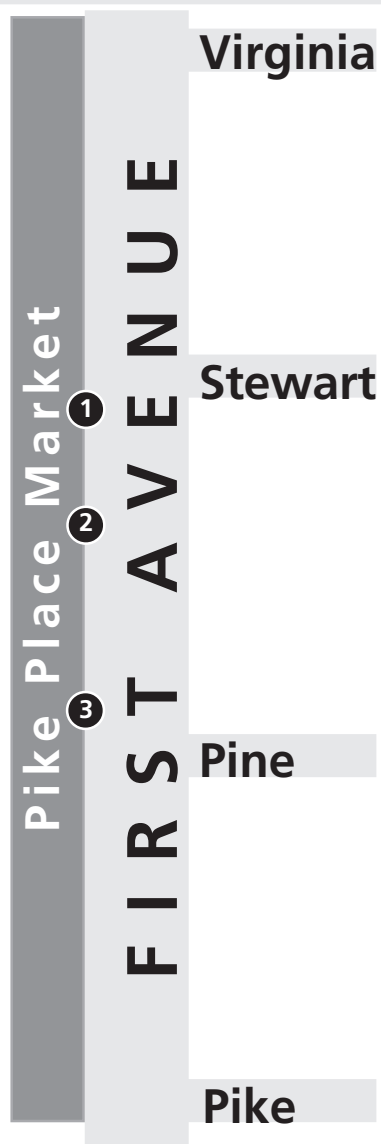
put it off. Then she became ill first a cough, then shortness of breath and some weight loss. Initially, she thought it was just a flu, but when her symptoms didn't dissipate after six weeks, she saw her local doctor, and was diagnosed with lung cancer advanced, inoperable lung cancer. She and her worried husband sat in the little exam room, hoping the university-affiliated physician would have something to offer her that her primary care physician didn't. The oncologist and I reviewed her films on a light box in the hall, and he shook his head. Lung cancer is just too aggressive—it was too late. We went back into the room, and I lifted a magazine off of an empty chair and sat down. The oncologist detailed the bad news, and explained her options for palliative chemotherapy to stall the inevitable, by perhaps a month or two. Finally the woman's husband asked "Doc, how much time are we talking about?" At that point, knowing the answer would be less than a year, I glanced

down at the magazine I was holding on my lap. On the backside of the magazine, there was an advertisement for a popular brand of cigarettes. A gorgeous, healthy-looking model, was smoking a cigarette, beaming at the camera with a perfect white smile. Somehow the profitable tobacco industries can get away with this, while Americans pay \$97.2 BILLION dollars, each year, in health care costs, and lost productivity, due to smoking-related illnesses. The emotional and physical damage comes without a price tag. We all know what cigarette smoking does to you stinks, causes bad breath, wrinkles, bad teeth and gums, mouth and throat cancer, emphysema, heart disease, strokes, and lung cancer. So, knowing this, why do people smoke? The answer is that cigarettes are marketed well, and nicotine is extremely addicting. The cigarette is an efficient, and highly-engineered delivery system that transmits nicotine to the brain; where it essentially tickles the brain's pleasure center. Removing

this stimulus causes a withdrawal syndrome that can last for a month or more after quitting. So is easy to quit? No. Is it hopeless? No way. According to QuitTobacco.org, the benefits are almost immediate: After 20 minutes, blood pressure, pulse, temperature in hands and feet normalize. After 8 hours, blood carbon monoxide level drops to normal, and oxygen level goes up to normal. After 24 hours the chance of heart attack starts decreasing. After 48 hours, nerve ending start to regrow, taste and smell starts to improve. After 2 weeks, circulation improves and lung function improves up to 30%. After 1 month, coughing, sinus congestion, and fatigue improves. Cilia (small hairs) regrow in lungs to better clear mucous, and prevent infection. After 1 year, risk of coronary artery disease is half that of a smoker. After 5 years, lung cancer rate decreases by 50%, risk of stroke becomes that of a nonsmoker, and risk of all other smoking-related cancers decreases. Don't keep putting it off. See your doctor for help. You can do it.

First Avenue

businesses



Dragon's Toy Box
Educational & Heirloom Toys, Games & Fun!

Unique educational toys and games for all ages.
Puzzles, activity books, art supplies, science kits, children's musical instruments, construction kits, wooden trains, infant & toddler toys, arts & crafts kits, dress-up, learning aids, play and collectible dolls, New and vintage Breyer Horses, puppets & marionettes.

1525 1st Ave, Ste 2A
Seattle, WA 98101
dragonstoybox@earthlink.net
206-652-2333

Bayou on 1st
at Pike Place Market
Simply the best!

Formerly Cafe Mimosa, same great food with a new look.

COUNTRY STYLE HEARTY BREAKFAST
(try our famous housemade granola...)

LUNCH - CAJUN, FRENCH AND MORE!!!
Fabulous Seafood Jambalaya,
...our delicious warm baguette sandwiches, pastas, gumbo...

1523 First Avenue (206) 624-2598

PIKE PLACE BAR & GRILL

For fine dining...
It's your Pike Place Market

Open 7 Days A Week
Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

PIKE PLACE BAR & GRILL

90 Pike Street Corner Market Bldg
ATM Available 624-1365

Keep 'em coming back in '06!
Call **Megan Lee** at **372-3157**
to advertise your
First Avenue Business
MarketAd@NWLink.com