

**CITY OF BALTIMORE**

SHEILA DIXON, Mayor



**HEALTH DEPARTMENT**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**T Minus 15 Days and Counting:  
No Better Time for Smokers to Quit**

**Baltimore, MD (January 17, 2008)** – In advance of the implementation of city and state laws on indoor smoking, the Baltimore City Health Department and the Baltimore City Medical Society are urging clinicians to help smokers quit.

February 1 is the landmark day when bars and restaurants in the city will go smokefree.

In a memo distributed to physicians, nurse practitioners and physician assistants in Baltimore, Health Commissioner Dr. Joshua M. Sharfstein summarizes the resources available to smokers, including:

- free smoking cessation classes;
- free nicotine patches and gum; and
- free telephone counseling.

“If smokers want to live longer, save money, have more energy, and even smell better, now is the time to quit,” said Dr. Sharfstein. “Doctors and nurses should offer help to smokers at every visit.”

“The Baltimore City Medical Society is pleased to join these enhanced efforts to engage our physicians to urge their patients to stop smoking,” said incoming president of the Baltimore City Medical Society, Dr. John T. Thompson. “This opportunity is consistent with our theme, ‘BCMS for a Healthy MD.’ We want our patients and our physician colleagues to enjoy good health.”

The Health Department and Medical Society joined state health officials and advocates to support cessation at the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene this morning.

A copy of the Health Commissioner’s memo is attached and will be available online at <http://baltimorehealth.org/>

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