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Prevent Blindness Joins CDC In Public Awareness Campaign to Help Educate Public on Dangerous Effects of Smoking on Vision

-National Groups Are Working Together to Spread Awareness Through the “Tips From Former Smokers” Program-

CHICAGO (March 30, 2015) – Prevent Blindness, the nation’s oldest volunteer eye health and safety non-profit organization, is joining the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in support of its annual [*Tips From Former Smokers*](#) (*Tips*) campaign to help educate the public on the negative impact that smoking may have on vision.

According to the [50th Anniversary Surgeon General’s Report on Smoking and Health](#), smoking can cause serious eye diseases, including age-related macular degeneration (AMD), the leading cause of vision loss in those ages 65 and older, and cataract, the leading cause of blindness in the world. And smokers with diabetes are at higher risk of developing diabetic retinopathy.

Over the years, the *Tips* campaign has featured a variety of people talking about their first-hand experiences of the negative health consequences of smoking. For the first time, the 2015 campaign includes the testimony from Marlene, age 68 from New York, who is currently losing her vision to AMD – directly linked to her years of cigarette smoking.

Prevent Blindness and CDC are working together to help raise awareness about the dangers of smoking on vision. The goal is to provide education, tools and resources and encourage all smokers to get help to quit. The groups are offering access to free information on a variety of eye health topics such as AMD, Cataract, and Diabetic Retinopathy as well as tips on how leading a healthy lifestyle can help save sight. Customizable fact sheets and additional resources are free to download at: www.preventblindness.org/smoking

“By joining forces with CDC, we can work together to motivate as many people as possible to quit smoking and improve not only their overall health, but help to save their vision in the future,” said Hugh R. Parry, president and CEO of Prevent Blindness.

For more information about Prevent Blindness, CDC’s *Tips From Former Smokers* campaign, or general eye health, please visit www.preventblindness.org, or call (800) 331-2020.

About Prevent Blindness

Founded in 1908, Prevent Blindness is the nation's leading volunteer eye health and safety organization dedicated to fighting blindness and saving sight. Focused on promoting a continuum of vision care, Prevent Blindness touches the lives of millions of people each year through public and professional education, advocacy, certified vision screening and training, community and patient service programs and research. These services are made possible through the generous support of the American public. Together with a network of affiliates, Prevent Blindness is committed to eliminating preventable blindness in America. For more information, or to make a contribution to the sight-saving fund, call 1-800-331-2020. Or, visit us on the Web at preventblindness.org or facebook.com/preventblindness.

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