

BREATHING

matters

A PUBLICATION OF BREATHE NEW HAMPSHIRE | WINTER 2026

2026 will be the final year of the printed versions of Breathing Matters!

We are excited to announce that we're going digital! Join our NEW E-newsletter to stay up to date on programs, events and resources for healthy lungs! *Sign up at BreatheNH.org.*

NEW YEAR, NEW FACES, NEW LEADERSHIP



Allyssa Thompson and Cindy Rybczyk have each dedicated nearly a decade of their careers to Breathe New Hampshire, bringing unwavering commitment, deep expertise, and a shared passion for improving lung health across the state.

Looking ahead, they're focused on strengthening community, deepening connection, and expanding support for all those impacted by respiratory health challenges.

One of the first initiatives that Allyssa and Cindy have implemented in their new roles was to expand the team at Breathe NH. In order to expand our programming across the Granite state, we welcome Emma Schuler, who will be focused on educating our community in COPD, vaping, tobacco use, and Asthma.



Back row, left to right: Dr. Albee Budnitz, Krystal Martinez, Jennifer Owen, Emma Schuler, Celeste Molan
Front Row, left to right, Allyssa Thompson, Cindy Rybczyk

MAKE YOUR NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTION TO QUIT SMOKING

The decision to quit is sometimes harder than the commitment itself. We find ourselves asking, am I ready? "Is it the right time? The truth is, you're ready when you decide that you are. We understand how difficult it is to take the first step - having the right resources and support can help you through the toughest part of your quit journey.

So you're ready to get started. Now what? Here's everything you need to know to get started on your quit journey.

MAKING A PLAN

Sometimes lightening your mental load can help you stay on track. Here's an easy ten-step process, so you can put your plan into action without distractions.

GET READY

Make a list of your reasons for quitting. Think about the places and things that make you want to smoke or vape, so you can be prepared.

PICK A QUIT DAY

Pick a day and put it on your calendar. Give yourself enough time to get ready for your quit day

GET SUPPORT

Tell your friends and family how they can help Visit QuitNowNH.org or call **1.800.QUIT.NOW** (1.800.784.8669) if you, a friend, or a family member wants help or more information.

Go to SmokeFree.gov for more resources. For teens visit MyLifeMyQuit.com or text "Start My Quit" to 36072.

GET PRODUCTS TO HELP YOU QUIT

Ask your doctor about smoking cessation tools, such prescription medicines, nicotine patches, nicotine gum, or lozenges. If you have insurance, ask if these products are free or discounted

START FRESH

Get rid of cigarettes, lighters, and vape devices before your quit day. Clean your home, car, and where you work. Don't let people smoke or vape in your home or car.

GET THROUGH QUIT DAY

You may feel tired, on edge, or tense but these feelings will pass. Stay busy, Drink a lot of water, avoid alcohol, and remember your reasons for quitting.

COLD WEATHER TIPS



As we brace ourselves for another long winter in New England, it's important to understand the risks of consistent low temperatures, especially when managing respiratory conditions.

Wisconsin-based Pulmonologist Aryan Shiari, M.D. recommends the following tips to help make breathing easier this winter:

1. Breathe in through your nose and exhale through your mouth.

Your nose does a better job at humidifying and warming the air than your mouth.

2. Wear a ski mask or scarf to wrap around your nose and mouth.

These items can trap some of the heat and moisture from your breath.

3. Avoid exercising outside.

Breathing heavier during exercise in cold weather can increase symptoms of asthma, COPD or chronic lung conditions.

While these recommendations are great for day-to-day habits in the winter, remember to stay on top of your vaccinations, staying away from family and friends who are sick and having proper diet and water intake at home.

Small changes like these can make significant changes in your respiratory health this winter.





2026 LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

As the New Hampshire legislative session gets underway, Breathe New Hampshire is actively monitoring key bills that impact public health, tobacco and vaping regulation, and air quality across the state. These proposals address issues ranging from tobacco taxation and youth marketing protections to vape safety standards, environmental disposal concerns, and preparedness for air quality incidents. Staying informed and engaged during this session is critical to protecting the health of our communities.

Legislation Breathe NH Is Monitoring:

- **HB 1596** - relative to the collection of certain health care program premiums; funding for the university system of New Hampshire; and raising the tobacco tax
- **HB 1315** - relative to the sale of tobacco products, e-cigarettes, devices, e-liquids, or alternative nicotine products
- **HB 1532** - relative to the maximum temperature for vape heating coils and other required safety measures
- **HB 1538** - preventing vape products from being marketed towards minors
- **HB 1096** - establishing a committee to study ways to manage disposal of vapes and e-cigarettes
- **HB 1398** - establishing a committee to study the resources available for response to air quality incidents across the state
- **SB 510** - ensuring state-operated, publicly accessible spaces have designated smoking areas undetectable to visitors
- **SB 596** - prohibiting smoking in Hampton Beach State Park

GET INVOLVED

Public input plays a vital role in shaping health-forward policies.

If you are interested in learning more, advocating for cleaner air, or supporting strong public health protections, please contact Breathe New Hampshire to get involved in this legislative session.

Visit the NH General Court website to learn more about current legislation or to find your elected officials: www.gc.nh.gov

PLANNING A SPRING CLEAN-UP, LET US HELP!



Breathe New Hampshire's Bag the Butts™ program raises awareness about cigarette litter and the risks of tobacco use. This Earth Day and during local spring clean-ups, we encourage you to include Bag the Butts™ in your efforts. Collect cigarette butts and spark important conversations on tobacco health risks.

Request your FREE toolkit today at
info@BreatheNH.org or call 603.669.2411.
Let us create a cleaner, healthier environment together!

IS VAPING STILL AN ISSUE IN YOUR SCHOOL?

Vaping continues to impact student health and learning—and Breathe New Hampshire is here to help. Our Vaping Unveiled program gives students the facts they need to make healthy, informed choices, with engaging, evidence-based content designed specifically for schools.

This spring, we're excited to introduce new updates to Vaping Unveiled, making the program even more relevant and interactive. Best of all, it's available at no cost to schools.

We're also thrilled to have Emma Schuler on the Breathe NH team, bringing Vaping Unveiled directly into schools and communities across New Hampshire.

Schools can schedule in-person presentations or convenient online modules for this school year.



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Remember BNH in your Will or Trust

Make a lasting impact on our mission by including Breathe New Hampshire in your estate plans!

With a variety of Planned Giving options, it's easier than ever to support Breathe New Hampshire and still support your own budget or long term financial plans!

GIFTS THAT HELP NOW

Stock, Donor Advised Funds, Retirement Assets (401k, IRA)

GIFTS THAT HELP TOMORROW

Including Breathe New Hampshire in your will or trust, either a percentage, specific amount, or naming as beneficiary of a certain asset

We encourage you to talk to your financial advisor or attorney to determine the best fit for you and your family.

Visit our website at BreatheNH.org for more information.

2026 UPCOMING EVENTS



CAFÉ BREATHE - JANUARY 14, 2026. 10:30AM TO 12:00 PM

ElectroMed, Inc. will be have information about their SmartVest® airway clearance system



COPD CONNECT - APRIL 8, 2026

Concord Hospital



EAGER BREATHER'S CRUISE - SEPTEMBER 2026

Lake Winnipesaukee



FAIRWAYS FOR AIRWAYS GOLF CLASSIC - SEPTEMBER 14, 2026

Lake Winnipesaukee Golf Club



RESPIRATORY CONTINUING MEDICAL EDUCATION CONFERENCE - FALL

Saint Anselm College

For more information or to register visit BreatheNH.org or call 603.669.2411