

NCA NEWSFAX

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

NCA • P.O. Box 6407 • BOISE, ID 83707 • 208-342-5402 • Fax: 208-342-0844

MAY 28, 2009

Emmett Messenger Index, Wednesday, May 27, 2009

Idaho nicotine fund, quit aids depleted by high demand

A record-breaking number of Idahoans sought help in kicking the nicotine habit in March and April, temporarily depleting the funding for Idaho Project Filter's free Nicotine Replacement Therapy program. Funding for the program will continue when the new state fiscal year begins on July 1.

"We're ecstatic that so many people are asking for help in quitting smoking," Jack Miller, Project Filter program manager said. "Quitting tobac-

Need help?

Idaho Quitline can be reached at 1-800-QUIT-NOW

co is one of the most important dates a smoker will decide on. If you've decided that today is the day, there is help to show you how. You don't need to wait for July 1."

Smokers can call the Idaho Quitline at 1-800-QUIT-NOW, a free telephone counseling service designed to help

smokers quit. Smokers can receive up to five free counseling sessions with a trained quit coach at their convenience. There are also community support groups and fee-based quitting smoking classes that smokers can connect with by calling the Idaho CareLine at 211.

Since July 2008, Idaho smokers have also been able to request a free four-week supply of nicotine patches, gum and lozenges to help them quit smoking. Money for the

Nicotine Replacement Therapy program comes from the Millennium Fund, and Idaho legislators voted this spring to continue the program beginning in July.

Recently, the program's popularity has skyrocketed, causing the original funding to be used sooner than expected. Typically, about 1,300 people seek help each month through Project Filter programs. That number doubled in March — after the federal tax on all

tobacco products increased — and reached more than 6,300 in April. Requests for the free nicotine replacement therapies shot up from 517 in January to 1,400 in March and 4,000 in April.

"These numbers tell us loud and clear that Idahoans want to quit smoking," Miller said. "We want to encourage people not to put it off. You'll notice the benefits almost immediately. Your blood pressure decreases in just 20 minutes and your risk of a heart attack begins to decrease

after just one day. Most smokers regret the day they started. Nobody regrets the day they stopped."

In 2007, 19 percent of Idaho adults reported smoking cigarettes. Tobacco use is the leading cause of preventable death in the U.S. To learn more about Project Filter, go to www.projectfilter.org.

*Idaho Department of Health
and Welfare press release*