



STATE OF OKLAHOMA

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Helpline's nicotine patch giveaway a hit with Oklahomans

Free two-week "starter kits" still available

OKLAHOMA CITY – Over 1,000 Oklahomans have already received free nicotine patches, gum or lozenges made available this month through the Oklahoma Tobacco Helpline. The free products are available through at least June 30th by calling the Oklahoma Tobacco Helpline at 1-800-QUIT-NOW (1-800-784-8669).

"We're thrilled with the strong demand for these free products because quitting tobacco helps people live longer, healthier lives" said Tracey Strader, executive director of the Oklahoma Tobacco Settlement Endowment Trust. "Most Oklahomans who use tobacco want to quit. Many just need real help to quit for good."

Callers to the Helpline receive free nicotine replacement "starter kits" when they enroll in the free telephone-based coaching program provided through the Helpline. The starter kit contains a two-week supply of nicotine patches, gum or lozenges, depending on each caller's needs, to help jump-start their quit attempt.

This promotion celebrates the month of June by especially encouraging men to quit tobacco because:

- In Oklahoma, two-thirds (67 percent) of all tobacco-caused cancer disease deaths are among men.
- In Oklahoma, 60 percent of all tobacco-caused cardiovascular disease deaths are among men.
- Smokeless tobacco use in Oklahoma is 20 times higher among men than among women.

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- In Oklahoma, over 3,500 men die each year from tobacco-caused diseases, including over 1,100 men who die from smoking-caused cancers of the trachea, lung, or bronchus, over 1,200 men who die from smoking-caused cardiovascular disease, and over 800 men who die from smoking-caused respiratory diseases such as emphysema.
- According to the Surgeon General, smoking cessation may reduce prostate cancer deaths.

Launched in September 2003, the Oklahoma Tobacco Helpline is supported by earnings from the Oklahoma Tobacco Settlement Endowment Trust and state tobacco tax funds made available through the Oklahoma State Department of Health.

Professional Quit Coaches™ work with Helpline callers to develop a quit plan tailored to their individual needs. Up to four follow-up calls with a quit coach are also provided free of charge. The Helpline's hours of operation are 7 a.m. to 11 p.m. seven days a week, and staff will return any messages left after hours. Services are also available in Spanish by calling 1-800-793-1552. For more information on the Helpline, please see: www.tset.ok.gov/programs/helpline.html.

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