

## Iranians waste away 8 million dollars in smoking every day - Tehran Times

Health Desk

01 June 2013 14:16 - **TEHRAN** - The head of Iranian Anti-Tobacco Association (IATA) has announced that Iranian cigarette smokers spend about 8 million dollars on smoking every day; however, the cost of treating diseases related to smoking is twice of that figure.

Seyyed Hassan Moein Shirazi, in an interview with the Persian service of the Mehr News on the occasion of World No Tobacco Day on Wednesday, said that Iran was the first country to approve the comprehensive tobacco control law in 2006, but unfortunately there has been no sign of progress in implementing the law.

“Foreign cigarettes have dominated the Iranian market by more than 90 percent,” Moein Shirazi said. “And smokers find cigarettes at their fingertips.”

“Education, information and prevention are the three most effective factors in the battle against tobacco,” he explained.

IATA, founded in 1983, has worked hard to decrease tobacco consumption in the country.

IATA’s hard work has led to the ratification and implementation of Iran’s national tobacco control law, which includes pictorial health warnings and tobacco tax increases.

**IATA’s work also includes:**

- Establishing several cessation clinics;
- Research on tobacco-related issues, such as effects of tobacco consumption.
- control policies on consumption.

- Facilitating strategies for fighting tobacco smuggling.
- Convincing officials on importance of tobacco control as a vital issue.

## **“Clean Breath” for the young**

One of IATA’s more interesting tobacco control strategies is to target young people through its “Clean Breath” program.

The Clean Breath program targets young people in the hope to steer them away from smoking at an early age – before they have taken up the habit and find it harder to quit later in life.

A researcher said that a recent Iranian study into the smoking patterns of Tehran school students found that roughly 30 percent had already tried smoking.

Therefore, IATA believes that encouraging preventive methods from childhood and developing effective methods of child-rearing for parents will have a great effect on preventing young people from taking up smoking.

The program aims to increase children’s awareness about:

- The harms of smoking to their physical, mental, social and economic well-being as well as the environment;
  - Unreasonable beliefs on tobacco use and the difficulty of quitting;
  - Acquiring self-knowledge and applying behavioral skills against cravings for smoking;
  - Training other family members to prevent tobacco use in the home and community.