



Tobacco Fact Sheet

Smokeless Tobacco

Keep Tobacco Sacred, Honor Your Health, Honor Your Nation

Numbers

at a Glance

80%

Higher risk of smokeless tobacco users developing oral cancer.

60%

Higher risk of smokeless tobacco users developing pancreatic and esophageal cancer.

28

Number of cancer causing agents in smokeless tobacco.

\$354 million dollars

The amount of money the five largest smokeless tobacco users have spent on advertising and promotion.



Northern Plains Tribal Tobacco Technical Assistance Center
A PROGRAM OF THE GREAT PLAINS TRIBAL CHAIRMEN'S HEALTH BOARD

What is Smokeless Tobacco?

Smokeless tobacco products contain tobacco or tobacco blends that are either chewed, sucked, or sniffed. Most smokeless tobacco products are placed between the cheek or lips and gums for a few minutes to hours. They have many names, such as spit tobacco, chew, pinch, or dip, and fall into several categories.

Chewing tobacco is in the form of loose leaves, leaves pressed together that is commonly known as "plug," to resemble a rope that is commonly known as "twist." Chewing tobacco is held between the cheek and gum. Usually the tobacco juices are spit out, but long-time users tend to swallow some of the juices.

Snuff is finely ground tobacco that comes in dry or moist forms and is sometimes packaged in ready-to-use pouches. Dry snuff is usually sniffed or swallowed, whereas moist snuff—similar to snus (see below)—is placed between the gum and the lip or cheek and slowly absorbed.

Snus is a tobacco product that originated in Sweden before being introduced to the United States. The moist tobacco powder is usually packaged in a pouch and placed in the mouth, inside the cheek, for absorption. It does not require the user to spit out tobacco juice; however, the pouch must be thrown away after use, not swallowed. Tobacco companies often market snus as a product that cigarette smokers can use in places where smoking is banned.



Smokeless Tobacco is NOT a safe alternative to smoking cigarettes

Public health advocates worry that laws banning smoking in certain public places will not effectively encourage people to quit using tobacco products as long as snus is available.

Dissolvable tobacco is powdered tobacco that is compressed to resemble a small, hard candy that dissolves in the mouth. It does not produce any tobacco juice that needs to be spit out or leave behind any substance that the user must throw away.

Smokeless tobacco causes significant health risks and is not a safe alternative to smoking cigarettes. The amount of nicotine absorbed from smokeless tobacco is three to four times the amount delivered by a cigarette.

Source: www.lung.org and www.cdc.gov

Is Smokeless Tobacco Safer than Smoking Cigarettes?



Mouth Cancer caused by Smokeless Tobacco

There is no safe form of tobacco. At least 28 chemicals in smokeless tobacco have been found to cause cancer. Smokeless tobacco causes oral cancer, esophageal cancer, and pancreatic cancer. Because all tobacco products are harmful and cause cancer, the use of all of these products should be strongly discouraged. Here's a look at some of the health problems related to smokeless tobacco:

- **Addiction.** Because smokeless tobacco contains nicotine, you can get addicted, just as you can with cigarettes and other tobacco products. Your body may actually absorb as much nicotine from chewing tobacco or snuff as it does from cigarettes. Just as with smoking, withdrawal from smokeless tobacco causes symptoms such as intense cravings, increased appetite, irritability and depressed mood.
- **Cancer.** Your risk of certain types of cancer increases if you use chewing tobacco or other types of smokeless tobacco. This includes esophageal cancer and various types of oral cancer, including cancers of your mouth, throat, cheek, gums, lips and tongue. You also face an increased risk of pancreatic cancer.
- **Cavities.** Chewing tobacco and other forms of smokeless tobacco cause tooth decay. That's because chewing tobacco contains high amounts of sugar, which contributes to cavities.
- **Gum disease.** The sugar and irritants in chewing tobacco and other forms of smokeless tobacco can cause your gums to pull away from your teeth in the area of your mouth where you place the chew. Over time you can develop gum disease, which can be severe enough to destroy the soft tissue and bone that support your teeth (periodontitis) and lead to tooth loss.
- **Heart disease.** Some forms of smokeless tobacco increase your heart rate and blood pressure. Some evidence suggests that long-term use of smokeless tobacco increases your risk of dying of certain types of heart disease and stroke.
- **Precancerous mouth lesions.** Smokeless tobacco increases your risk of developing small white patches called leukoplakia (loo-koh-PLAY-key-uh) inside your mouth where the chew is most often placed. These mouth lesions are precancerous — meaning that the lesions could one day become cancer.

How Can I Quit Smokeless Tobacco?

- Make your quit day special right from the beginning. You're doing yourself a huge favor.
- Change daily routines to break away from tobacco triggers. When you eat breakfast, don't sit in the usual place at the kitchen table. Get right up from the table after meals.
- Make an appointment to get your teeth cleaned. You'll enjoy the fresh, clean feeling and a whiter smile.
- Keep busy and active. Start the day with a walk, run, swim, or workout. Aerobic exercise will help you relax. Plus, it boosts energy, stamina, and all-around fitness and curbs your appetite.
- Chew substitutes. Try sugar-free hard candies or gum, cinnamon sticks, mints, beef jerky, or sunflower seeds. Carry them with you and use them whenever you have the urge to dip or chew.
- Call **the SD Quitline** at **1-866-SD-QUITS**. Talk with a smoking cessation counselor about quitting smokeless tobacco. You can call the Quitline Mon. through Fri., 7:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m. and Sat. 8:00 am to 5:00 pm CT.

