Smokeless Tobacco Fact Sheet

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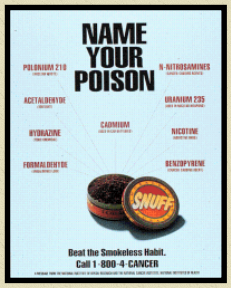
What is smokeless tobacco?

There are two forms of smokeless tobacco: moist snuff and chew. Snuff is the most popular form of smokeless tobacco in the United States. Snuff also known as dipping, is finely ground tobacco usually place between the bottom lip and gum. Chew, which is shredded tobacco leaves placed between the cheek and gum, comes in either leaf or plug forms.

Who uses smokeless tobacco?

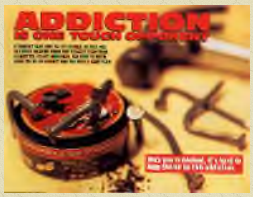
Although a lot more people smoke cigarettes than use smokeless tobacco, it is estimated that over 7.8 million people, 12 years and older, use smokeless tobacco regularly. Smokeless tobacco is usually used by men; only around 1% of women are known to use it. In the military, 20 % of Marines use smokeless tobacco, and 9 % of Sailors chew and dip.

What are the ingredients of smokeless tobacco?



- Nicotine-a highly addictive drug
- Formaldehyde-embalming fluid
- Sweeteners-are added to improve taste, sugars promote tooth decay
- Abrasives-gritty materials that wear down the surfaces of teeth
- Salt-which can contribute to high blood pressure and kidney disease
- Carcinogens-cancer causing chemicals
- Polonium 210-a nuclear waste
- Arsenic-a metallic element that can form poisonous compounds

Which is more addictive – cigarettes or smokeless tobacco?



Some researchers say that because smokeless tobacco is absorbed into the bloodstream more rapidly, it can be even more addictive than cigarettes.

Nicotine is as addictive as other powerful drugs such as cocaine and heroin according to experts. A tin of snuff has the same amount of nicotine as 60 cigarettes. An average amount of dip or chew, held in the mouth for 30 minutes, has as much nicotine as smoking four cigarettes!

What are the health risks associated with smokeless tobacco?

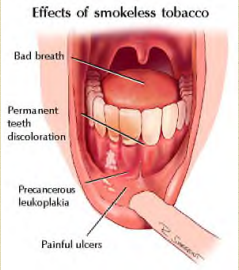
Those who use smokeless tobacco increase their risk of:

- Tooth abrasion-the grit in smokeless tobacco wear down the surfaces of teeth.
- Tooth decay-is caused by the sugars that are added to smokeless tobacco.
- Tooth Discoloration and Bad Breath-long term use of smokeless tobacco stains teeth and can give a person bad breath.
- Mouth cancer-those who use smokeless tobacco are 50% more likely to develop cancer of the cheeks, gums, lips, and tongue.
- Throat cancer-cancer of the esophagus and larynx.

- Heart disease-heart attacks, strokes, and high blood pressure.
- Stomach problems-ulcers, stomach cancer, and nausea
- Loss of taste and smell-causes loss of appetite which causes poor nutrition and health.
- Physical changes-fatigue, muscle weakness, dizziness, and decreased physical performance.

What are the signs of oral cancer?

A Dentist or Physician should be consulted if any of the following trouble signs occur:



- A sore that does not heal
- A lump or thickening anywhere in your mouth or neck
- A prolonged sore throat
- Trouble swallowing, chewing, or moving your tongue or jaw
- A feeling of something in the throat

Reasons to Quit!

There are plenty of good reasons to quit smokeless tobacco! Successful people who have said goodbye have found personal and meaningful reasons to quit.

How to successfully quit using smokeless tobacco

- Pick a quit date.
- Develop a plan.
- Decide the best way for you to quit – going cold turkey, cutting down, using a non-nicotine replacement.
- Chew sugarless gum, use hard candy, toothpicks or sunflower seeds.
- Devise some strategies to deal with cravings, urges, temptations and risky situations.
- Remember all the positive reasons for quitting!
- Avoid situations and people that may encourage tobacco use.
- Ask your shipmates, friends and family for support and understanding!
- Consider using a online cessation program http://www-nehc.med.navy.mil/hp/tobacco/tobacco_quit_now.htm
- Talk to someone at the National Helpline 1-877-448-7848