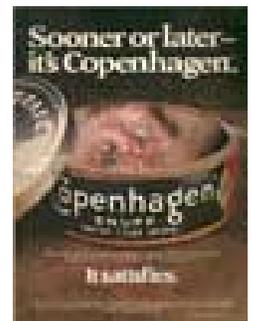


# Smokeless Tobacco

## What is Smokeless Tobacco?

- Smokeless tobacco comes in many forms:
  - chewing tobacco, (or dip, chew, chaw, spit tobacco , snuff) which is a leaf tobacco
  - snuff, which is finely ground tobacco
- Like cigarettes, chewing tobacco contains nicotine, an addictive drug. While you may feel relaxed while chewing, nicotine actually increases your heart rate and blood pressure. After a short time, you will probably feel a need to take another dip about every 20 to 30 minutes to maintain your nicotine "high."
- Many people think smokeless tobacco isn't as bad as cigarettes.
- One study reported that 77 percent of kids thought cigarette smoking was very harmful, but only 40 percent thought smokeless tobacco was very harmful.
- Smokeless tobacco prevalence was highest among men in West Virginia (18.4 percent) followed by men in Wyoming (14.7 percent). Among women, the prevalence of smokeless tobacco use was 1.7 percent or less in all states included in the study.



## Hazards of Smokeless Tobacco Use

Kids who use smokeless tobacco are more likely to start using cigarettes

### Nicotine Addiction

### Heart Problems

- Increased heart rate
- Blood vessels constrict
- Poor blood circulation
- Higher blood pressure
- Blood clotting problems

### Cancer

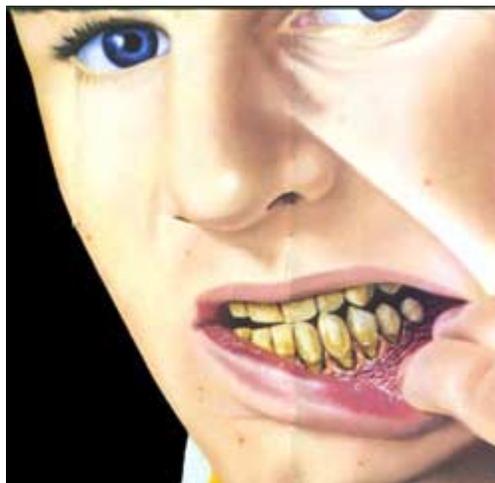
- Oral cancer
- Palate cancer
- Tongue cancer

### Teeth & Gums

- Gingivitis
- Gum ulcers
- Leukoplakia
- Tooth decay
- Halitosis
- Stained Teeth
- Calculus deposits
- Ground down teeth
- Periodontal erosion

## Some more facts.

- Chewing tobacco lessens a person's sense of taste and ability to smell. As a result, users tend to eat more salty and sweet foods, both of which are harmful if consumed in excess.
- Some athletes have developed mouth and throat cancer after only 6 or 7 years of using spit tobacco.
- Nearly one in ten teenagers (11.4%) nationally use smokeless tobacco on a daily basis.
- Nearly one in five male teenagers (19.7%) have used smokeless tobacco in the last month.
- Among high school seniors who ever used smokeless tobacco, almost three-fourths began in ninth grade.
- More than \$127 million was spent advertising smokeless tobacco products in 1995.
- Over 3 million teenagers use spit tobacco.
- One can of snuff per day delivers as much nicotine as 60 cigarettes.



## What's in Smokeless Tobacco?

Nicotine... an addictive drug  
Cancer-causing chemicals (carcinogens)  
Polonium 210... nuclear waste  
Radioactive Elements  
Formaldehyde... embalming fluid

In a Major League Baseball poll, not one player who used dip or chew said that the tobacco improved his game or sharpened his reflexes.



## Danger Signs

If you use smokeless tobacco, or have in the past, you should be on the lookout for some of these early signs of oral cancer:

- A sore that does not heal
- A lump or white patch
- A prolonged sore throat
- Difficulty in chewing
- Restricted movement of the tongue or jaws
- A feeling of something in the throat

Remember that pain is rarely an early symptom.

### Sources:

American Cancer Society-<http://www.cancer.org>, American Dental Association- <http://www.ada.org>, Centers of Disease Control- <http://www.cdc.gov>, National Cancer Institute-<http://rex.nci.nih.gov>, U.S. Department of Health & Human Services- <http://www.os.dhhs.gov>.

*For more information please contact:  
Spokane Regional Health District  
Tobacco Prevention and Control Program  
(509) 324-1553*



