

Smokeless Tobacco Facts

Types of Smokeless (Spit) Tobacco

The two types of smokeless tobacco (ST) are chewing tobacco and snuff. Chewing tobacco is sold in loose leaf, twist and plug forms. Snuff comes in moist, dry and sachet forms. The most popular form of ST today is moist snuff.

Prevalence

Of the estimated 10 million users of ST, 3 million are under the age of 21.

Almost 25% of young users start by the 6th grade, and almost 75% start by the 9th grade. In 1970, young males ages 17-19 used ST the least of any age group. Today, usage by males of these ages is the highest of any age group.

More than 5% of adult American males, and 1% of females, use ST.

Among US youth in grades 9-12, 10-20% use ST at least once a month and 2-3% use daily.

Tobacco Industry Advertising and Promotion

The tobacco industry has targeted male adolescents with its aggressive advertising. Ads associate ST with rodeos, rock stars, and sports heroes. ST companies sponsor rock concerts, rodeos, auto racing and tractor pulls.

Risks of Smokeless Tobacco Use

Spit tobacco is not a safe substitute for smoking. It can cause oral cancers and lead to addiction.

The major carcinogens in ST are nitrosamines, polynuclear aromatic hydrocarbons, and radioactive and metallic compounds. The nitrosamine content of ST exceeds beyond 1000X the nitrosamine content allowed by the FDA in products like beer and bacon.

ST is also associated with cancers of the esophagus, larynx, and stomach, and an increased risk of heart attacks and other cardiovascular diseases.

40-60% of ST users exhibit leukoplakia in the area where the quid is held, usually within a few months of beginning regular use.

Leukoplakia is regarded as precancerous with a malignant transformation rate of 2-6%.

Other oral side effects of ST include gingival recession, staining of teeth, loss of taste, and bad breath.

Chewing tobacco users have an increase in dental caries due to the higher sugar content in this ST product.

Addiction

The nicotine in ST is absorbed directly into the bloodstream and is addicting.

Spit tobacco users have similar, or even higher, levels of nicotine than smoker who use a pack or more a day.



Withdrawal from regular ST use results in the same withdrawal symptoms and discomfort seen in heavy smokers attempting to quit.

Manufacturers of ST products have altered the nicotine content and pH, added flavors, and packaged moist snuff in sachets as starter products. These products gradually move novice users on to higher levels of nicotine addiction as their tolerance increases.

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Prevention and Early Detection

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When Smokers Quit—The Health Benefits Over Time

20 minutes after quitting: Your heart rate and blood pressure drops.

("Effect of Smoking on Arterial Stiffness and Pulse Pressure Amplification", Mahmud, A, Feely, J. 2003. *Hypertension*:41:183.)

12 hours after quitting: The carbon monoxide level in your blood drops to normal.

(US Surgeon General's Report, 1988 , p. 202)

2 weeks to 3 months after quitting: Your circulation improves and your lung function increases.

(US Surgeon General's Report, 1990, pp.193, 194,196, 285, 323)

1 to 9 months after quitting: Coughing and shortness of breath decrease; cilia (tiny hair-like structures that move mucus out of the lungs) regain normal function in the lungs, increasing the ability to handle mucus, clean the lungs, and reduce the risk of infection.

(US Surgeon General's Report, 1990, pp. 285-287, 304)

1 year after quitting: The excess risk of coronary heart disease is half that of a smoker's.

(US Surgeon General's Report, 1990, p. vi)

5 years after quitting: Your stroke risk is reduced to that of a nonsmoker 5 to 15 years after quitting.

(US Surgeon General's Report, 1990, p. vi)

10 years after quitting: The lung cancer death rate is about half that of a continuing smoker's. The risk of cancer of the mouth, throat, esophagus, bladder, cervix, and pancreas decrease.

(US Surgeon General's Report, 1990, pp. vi, 131, 148, 152, 155, 164,166)

15 years after quitting: The risk of coronary heart disease is that of a nonsmoker's.

(US Surgeon General's Report, 1990, p. vi)



Additional Resources

Quitting Smoking

Successful methods, nicotine replacement, staying quit and more

SMOKING VOCABULARY

tar

nicotine

carbon monoxide

withdrawal

cancer

Emphysema

leukoplakia

elastin

cataract

habit

addiction



Student Handout

Chapter 1b

Effects of Smoking on the Human Body

Nicotine

What is it?

A drug that speeds your body up (stimulant)

Effects on the body:

Nausea

Dizziness

Weakness

Addiction

Narrows blood vessels and arteries

Decreases skin temperature and makes your hands and feet cold

Makes your heart beat faster and harder

Causes blood pressure to rise.

Deadens taste buds

Causes loss of appetite



Effects of Smoking on the Human Body

Tar

What is it?

A hot, sticky mass of dirty particles that coats the lungs as it cools. Contains over 4,700 chemicals and compounds such as arsenic, cyanide, ammonia, lead, and aluminum.

Effects on the body:

Paralyzes cilia, the hair-like brooms that sweep your lungs clean of dirt and germs.

Coats your lungs with a sticky, black goo.

Causes death to the good cells (macrophages) that eat up invading germs in your lungs.

Increases the risk of getting sick.

May cause cancer and infections.



Student Handout

Chapter 1b

Effects of Smoking on the Human Body

Carbon Monoxide (CO)

What is it?

A gas that is colorless, odorless and poisonous.

Effects on the body:

Steals the place of oxygen in your bloodstream which makes you feel dizzy and can give you headaches.

Puts stress on your heart and lungs.

Makes the heart beat harder.

Makes you breathe faster because you are not getting enough oxygen.

Oxygen feeds the body's cells, tissues and organs. Lack of enough oxygen will make them weak and can kill them.



Reasons Not to Smoke

I refuse to use drugs. Nicotine is an addictive drug.

Cigarettes smell bad and the smell clings to your hair, clothes and breath.

It is expensive.

I'm too smart to be tricked by the tobacco companies.

My friends don't smoke.

Someone in my family got sick from smoking.

Cigarettes will hurt my body.

Cigarettes make your teeth yellow and give you cavities.

My parents would be disappointed with me if they found out.

I want to set a good example for my younger brother or sister.

I don't want the tobacco companies to have my money.



What's In Cigarette Smoke?

According to the United States Environmental Protection Agency, cigarette smoke contains 4,700 chemicals and compounds. Many of these are highly toxic and almost 50 have been proven to be *class A carcinogens* or cancer causing in humans. The following are some of the substances found in cigarette smoke:

Cancer Causing Agents:

- Nitrosamines
- Crysenes
- Cadmium
- Benzo(a)pyrene
- Polonium 210
- Nickel
- P.A.Hs
- Dibenz Acidine
- B-Naphthylamine
- Urethane
- N. Nitrosonornicotine
- Totuidine

Metals:

- Aluminum
- Mercury
- Silicon
- Titanium
- Lead
- Copper

Acetone:

- Nail Polish Remover/
Paint Remover

Ammonia:

- Floor Cleaner

Arsenic:

- Poison

Butane:

- Cigarette Lighter Fluid

Cadmium:

- Found in Batteries

Carbon Monoxide:

- Found in Car Exhaust Fumes

DDT/Dieldrin:

- Insecticides

Hydrogen Cyanide:

- A Gas Chamber Poison

Nicotine:

- Insecticide/Addictive Drug

Nitrobenzene:

- Gasoline Additive

Toluene:

- Industrial Solvent

Vinyl Chloride:

- Makes PVC pipes

Children are especially susceptible to these poisons. For them, exposure to secondhand smoke can cause middle ear effusion, decreased lung function, lower respiratory tract infections and can increase the intensity of asthma conditions.

