



What is Smokeless Tobacco?

There are three different forms of Smokeless Tobacco:

- Chewing tobacco is in the form of a loose leaf and sometimes flavored.¹
- Snuff tobacco is moist tobacco that can come in pouches.²
- Lozenges, sticks, strips, and orbs are considered dissolvable forms of smokeless tobacco.³

What is in Smokeless Tobacco?

The following chemicals found in smokeless tobacco are also known to cause cancer:

- A radioactive element (polonium-210). This chemical is found in the fertilizer that is used to grow tobacco.
- When heat is used during the curing process of tobacco, polynuclear aromatic hydrocarbons, also known as polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons, are formed.
- Arsenic, beryllium, cadmium, chromium, cobalt, lead, nickel, and mercury are all metals that are deemed to be harmful.⁴

Nicotine, which is highly addictive, is also found in smokeless tobacco.¹⁵

Who Are the Users?

- Each day in the U.S., nearly 1,300 youth under 18 years of age use smokeless tobacco for the first time, more than 950 of whom are male. Nearly 80% of adult daily smokeless tobacco users began using it before age 18.⁶
- Nationwide, 1.9% (an estimated 280,000) of high school students and 0.5% (an estimated 50,000) of middle school students were current users in 2014.⁷
- Smokeless tobacco use is more than twice as common in rural areas than urban areas.⁸

What Are the Health Risks?

- Out of the 4,000 known chemicals in smokeless tobacco, at least 30 are known to cause cancer.⁹
- Chewing smokeless tobacco allows the addictive chemical nicotine to be absorbed through the tissue in the mouth, and other chemicals such as lead, formaldehyde, and carcinogens, like cadmium and arsenic, are also released.¹⁰
- Over 2,300 people are diagnosed with oral, esophageal, and pancreatic cancers caused by smokeless tobacco use each year in the U.S. 70% of these diagnoses are oral cancer.⁹

- Not only is smokeless tobacco cancerous, but is also responsible for gingivitis and periodontitis¹¹, tooth loss as a result of gum disease¹², cavities, and stained teeth.
- Smokeless tobacco users have an increased risk of heart disease and stroke.⁹
- Smokeless tobacco causes cancer of the mouth, esophagus, and pancreas.^{13,14}
- White or gray patches inside the mouth known as leukoplakia can lead to cancer.¹³
- Using smokeless tobacco during pregnancy can increase the risk for early delivery and stillbirth.¹⁴
- If smokeless tobacco is used during pregnancy, it can affect how a baby's brain develops before birth.^{14,15}
- Smokeless tobacco can cause nicotine poisoning in children.¹⁶

How to Quit

Freedom From Smoking[®]

Freedom From Smoking[®] is a great fit for individuals who use smokeless tobacco, as it provides additional support, helps individuals create a tailored quit plan, and provides the ground work for a strong relapse prevention program. Freedom From Smoking[®] Plus also provides 12 full months of ongoing support for quitters, which increases the length and duration of counseling and continual support services to assist in long-term sustainability rates. Should you have any questions or would like additional support in developing a treatment plan, please visit us on lung.org or give us a call at 1-800-LUNGUSA.

Pennsylvania Quitline

1 (800) QUIT-NOW (784-8669)

Spanish-speaking: 1 (855) DEJELO-YA (335-3569)

The Pennsylvania Quitline is a free local resource for quitting tobacco. It provides over-the-phone counseling services with a certified quit coach, nicotine patches and lozenges (for qualified callers), and support for all Pennsylvania residents.

Information and self-help materials are available at

PA.QuitLogix.org.

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- 12 U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (USDHHS). Preventing Tobacco Use among Youth and Young Adults: A Report of the Surgeon General. Atlanta, GA: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Office on Smoking and Health; 2012.
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