



Smokeless Tobacco

Many people who use smokeless tobacco believe these products are safer than cigarettes. Sometimes, people may switch from cigarettes to smokeless tobacco as an initial step towards quitting entirely. However, smokeless tobacco has not been proven to help people quit and can lead towards nicotine addiction and other serious health implications.

What are some types of smokeless tobacco?

- **Snuff** can be found in both moist or dry forms. Moist snuff is a fine-grain tobacco that users can “pinch” or “dip” between their lower lip and gum. Dry snuff is powdered and inhaled through the nose.
- **Chewing tobacco** is often “shredded” or “bricked” tobacco that users put between their cheek and gums.
- **Snus** is a type of moist, powdered tobacco typically packaged in tea-like pouches that are placed under the lip for extended periods of time.
- **Dipping tobacco**, also known as moist snuff, spit tobacco, or dip is used by pinching a clump of moist tobacco from a tin and placing it between the lower lip and gums.
- **Electronic cigarette** is a battery-powered device that delivers a vaporized nicotine solution through inhalation. No tobacco, smoke or combustion is involved.
- **Dissolvable tobacco** is a nicotine product that can be held in the mouth or broken into small pieces and nestled between the gums and lip. It is similar to snus or chewing tobacco but does not require spitting.

Who uses chewing tobacco?

Of the 12 to 14 million Americans who chew, one-third are under 21 and more than half of those chewers developed the behavior before age 13. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reports that as many as 13.4% of high school boys and 2.3% of high school girls use smokeless tobacco.

What are the risks of smokeless tobacco?

The negative effects of smokeless tobacco include:

- Bad breath, stained teeth, mouth sores, tooth decay and loss of teeth
- Nicotine addiction
- Cracking and bleeding gums and lips
- Greater risk of heart attacks and strokes from increased heart rate and high blood pressure
- Cancers of the mouth, lips, tongue, floor of the mouth, roof of the mouth, gums, cheeks stomach lining, esophagus and bladder

How can I quit?

The decision to quit is difficult, but luckily there several effective resources available to people who are serious about giving up tobacco. Some quitting strategies include:

- Talking to your health care provider about using nicotine replacement therapy
- Using substitutes such as tobacco-free mint-leaf snuff, sugarless gum and candy
- Asking your friends and family for support
- Joining a quit smoking support group such as Respiratory Health Association’s Courage to Quit program. For more information, please call (312) 229-6186.