



Smokeless Tobacco

What is smokeless tobacco?

Smokeless tobacco is tobacco that is not burned but is used in another form. Smokeless tobacco products come in many forms includingⁱ:



- Chewing tobacco, which is placed between the cheek and gums
- Snuff:
 - Dried snuff, which can be sniffed
 - Dip, moist snuff used like chewing tobacco
 - Snus, a small pouch of moist snuff
- Dissolvable products, including lozenges, orbs, sticks, and strips

Does smokeless tobacco cause cancer?

Some people mistakenly believe that smokeless tobacco products are safer than cigarettes. However, research shows that there is no safe form of tobacco. Smokeless tobacco contains harmful chemicals that can cause oral cancer, esophageal cancer, and pancreatic cancerⁱⁱ. In addition, smokeless tobacco is associated with gum recession, tooth decay, and gum disease.ⁱⁱⁱ



Usage

While cigarette use has declined over the past decade, both the consumption and sale of smokeless tobacco is on the rise^{iv}. In 2012, 7.1% men and 0.4% women used smokeless tobacco products in the United States^{iv}. The rates for service members are even higher. According to the Fleet and Marine Corps Health Risk Assessment, 21% of marines and 10% of sailors report using dip^v. Smokeless tobacco use may be increasing due to a few factors: individuals mistakenly believe smokeless tobacco is safer than smoking; smokeless tobacco is typically less expensive than cigarettes; and the tobacco industry has marketed smokeless tobacco as an easy and safe nicotine delivery mechanism in areas where smoking is prohibited^{vi}.



Is smokeless tobacco addictive?

Some people mistakenly believe that using smokeless tobacco products can help them quit smoking. However, smokeless tobacco products contain nicotine and can be just as addictive as cigarettes^{vii}.

Where to go for more information and help.

- Talk with your medical or dental provider at your medical treatment facility, on your ship, or at your battalion aid station
- Call 1-800-QUIT-NOW to reach your state quit line
- Visit the Department of Defense education campaign www.ucanquit2.org for more information and quitting support
- Visit your local health promotion office or health promotion personnel
- Visit the Navy and Marine Corps Public Health Center's (NMCPHC) [Tobacco Free Living website](#)

References

ⁱ Be TobaccoFree.gov. Smokeless Tobacco Products. <https://betobaccofree.hhs.gov/about-tobacco/smokeless-tobacco/>. Accessed January 2017.

ⁱⁱ National Cancer Institute. Smokeless Tobacco and Cancer. <https://www.cancer.gov/about-cancer/causes-prevention/risk/tobacco/smokeless-fact-sheet>. Updated October 2010. Accessed January 2017.

ⁱⁱⁱ Be TobaccoFree.gov. Tobacco Facts and Figures. <https://betobaccofree.hhs.gov/about-tobacco/facts-figures/>. Accessed January 2017.

^{iv} Health and Human Services. Surgeon General Report: The Health Consequences of Smoking—50 Years of Progress. <https://www.surgeongeneral.gov/library/reports/50-years-of-progress/full-report.pdf>. Updated January 2014. Accessed January 2017.

^v Navy and Marine Corps Public Health Center. Fleet and Marine Corps Health Risk Assessment, 02 January – December 31, 2015. <http://www.med.navy.mil/sites/nmcphc/Documents/health-promotion-wellness/general-tools-and-programs/2015-HRA-Report-TR-214-2016.pdf>. Update May 2016. Accessed January 2017.

^{vi} Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report.

https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm6419a6.htm?s_cid=mm6419a6_w. Updated May 2015. Accessed January 2017.

^{vii} Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Smokeless Tobacco: Health Effects.

https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/data_statistics/fact_sheets/smokeless/health_effects. Updated December 2016. Accessed January 2017.