

Background Information

Smokeless Tobacco



Smokeless tobacco is tobacco that is used by the mouth or nose. These tobacco products are chewed, sucked or snorted, and not burned.

Forms of Smokeless Tobacco

Snuff is a pinch of ground-up moist tobacco usually placed between the bottom lip and gum. This action is known as 'dipping'.

Chew is shredded tobacco leaves that are placed between the cheek and gum. This is known as a 'wad'.

A **plug** is shredded tobacco leaves that are pressed into a hard block and placed between the cheek and gum.

Snus is tobacco that comes in a pouch or pinch form. It is placed between the lip and gum.

A **tablet** is dissolvable tobacco that sits inside the mouth.

For more information on smokeless tobacco, see the following link:

<http://www.health.gov.sk.ca/smoking-and-your-health>

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- Smokeless tobacco is not safe. It is addictive and contains many harmful chemicals. Twenty-eight carcinogens (cancer causing agents) have been found in smokeless tobacco products to-date.
- The makers of smokeless tobacco add gritty materials (abrasives) to wear down the surfaces of the teeth which cut the insides of the cheeks and gums so that the nicotine from the tobacco can get into the bloodstream.

For more information on smokeless tobacco and abrasives, see the following link:

<http://www.health.gov.sk.ca/smokless-tobacco-ingredients>

- One tin of snuff has approximately the same amount of nicotine as 60 cigarettes.

For more information on nicotine and smokeless tobacco, see the following link:

<http://www.health.gov.sk.ca/smokeless-tobacco-addiction>

- Smokeless tobacco contains many poisons and harmful chemicals. Some of these poisons and chemicals include nicotine, carcinogens, sweeteners, abrasives, salt and many other chemicals that are harmful to your health.

For more information on chemicals and smokeless tobacco, see the following link:

<http://www.health.gov.sk.ca/smokeless-tobacco-facts>

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Some of the health effects from using smokeless tobacco include:

Cancer is a disease that starts in the cells of the body. Using smokeless tobacco products increases the likeliness of getting certain types of cancers such as cancer of the esophagus (the tube that takes water and food to the stomach), voice box, stomach, and mouth (throat, cheek, gum, lip and tongue). Treatment for these types of cancer involve surgery which often affects speech, the ability to eat, and can disfigure the face and body.

For more information on smokeless tobacco and cancer, see the following links:

http://www.cancer.ca/Saskatchewan/About%20cancer.aspx?sc_lang=en

http://kidshealth.org/teen/drug_alcohol/tobacco/smokeless.html

On average, half of all oral cancer victims die within five years.

For more information on oral cancer, see the following link:

<http://www.albertahealthservices.ca/2513.asp>

Heart disease consists of many different conditions that are harmful to the heart (e.g., heart attack, angina, arrhythmia, etc.). Using tobacco causes the blood vessels to narrow, the heart to beat faster and an increases blood pressure.

For more information on heart disease, see the following links:

<http://www.health.gov.sk.ca/smokeless-tobacco-facts>

www.heartandstroke.sk.ca

Physical changes such as fatigue, muscle weakness, dizziness and a decline in physical performance has also been reported among tobacco users.

For more information on tobacco and physical changes, see the following link:

<http://www.health.gov.sk.ca/tobacco-health-risk>

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A **stroke** is a sudden loss of brain function. It is caused by the interruption of blood flow to the brain. The effects of a stroke depend on where the brain is injured and how much damage has occurred. A stroke can impact the ability to move, see, remember, speak, reason, read and write. Smoking causes an increase in blood pressure and lowers oxygen levels in the blood which increases the risk of developing a stroke.

For more information on strokes, see the following links:

http://www.heartandstroke.sk.ca/site/c.inKMILNIEmG/b.3657421/k.7212/Stroke_www.What_is_Stroke.htm

Dental disease occurs from using smokeless tobacco products. The sugar added causes cavities. Coarse particles also harm the gums and create mouth sores. Smokeless tobacco causes leukoplakia, a white lump that appears in the mouth that can lead to cancer. Other negative health effects include stained teeth, gingivitis, bad breath, black hairy tongue and an increase in saliva causing drooling.

For more information on dental disease, see the following link:

<http://www.health.gov.sk.ca/adx/asp/adxGetMedia.aspx?DocID=f96feddc-8e78-4786-87dd-89496c243e2f&MediaID=4109&Filename=smokeless-tobacco-july-2010.pdf&l=English>

Stomach problems occur with the use of smokeless tobacco as the juice from the product is swallowed. This may lead to stomach ulcers (a break on the skin/organ, or cells from tissue that have become inflamed, have died or shed) and stomach cancer.

For more information on stomach cancer, see the following link:

<http://www.mdanderson.org/patient-and-cancer-information/cancer-information/glossary-of-cancer-terms/u.htm>