

Smokeless Tobacco

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Smokeless tobacco is also called spit tobacco, chewing tobacco, chew, plug, snuff or dip.

There are several types of smokeless tobacco, including:

- **Snuff:** a finely ground or shredded tobacco. It can be loose or packaged in teabag-like pouches. The user puts a pinch or dip between the cheek and gum. Snuff can also be inhaled through the nose.
- **Chewing tobacco:** a loose leaf or twisted tobacco. The user puts a pinch or dip inside the cheek.
- **Dissolvable (strips, sticks, orbs):** a tobacco product that dissolves in the mouth.
- **Snus:** small pouches of moist snuff the user swallows, not spits.

Facts About Smokeless Tobacco

- Smokeless tobacco products are not a safe alternative to smoking. Any form of tobacco contains many toxic chemicals and high levels of nicotine.

For example, the nicotine levels in 1 tin of smokeless tobacco is roughly equal to 4 packs of cigarettes. These chemicals move from your mouth to all parts of your body through your bloodstream.

- Smokeless tobacco contains *a lot* of sugar.

Effects of Smokeless Tobacco

Using smokeless tobacco causes:

- an increased risk of mouth cancers
- an increased risk of stomach, esophageal, throat or pancreatic cancer
- gum disease
- gum recession (when your gums pull away from your teeth)
- sores, white patches, red patches and lumps in your mouth
- increased heart rate
- increased blood pressure
- higher risk of heart attack
- bad breath and stained teeth.

It is important to see a dentist every 6 months when you use smokeless tobacco so the dentist can watch for pre-cancerous changes in your mouth.

Preparing To Quit

- Make a personal pact with yourself to quit.
- Pick a date for quitting.
- Build support before you quit. Have people who will support your decision and help you quit.
- Plan your reward for each day you do not use tobacco.

(over)

- Get ready to quit. Get rid of the rest of your smokeless tobacco.
- Make plans on how to handle situations and people that make you want to use tobacco.
- Quit on your quit day.

Quitting Aids

It can be hard to quit. To help ease withdrawal symptoms, try any of the following:

- If you choose to use nicotine replacement therapy products, you may have to use higher levels or use them more often in order to get relief from cravings.
 - Nicotine gum or lozenges: The gum slowly releases nicotine into your mouth when you chew it and “park” it between your cheek and gums. A lozenge releases nicotine as it dissolves in your mouth.
 - Nicotine patches: They release a steady dose of nicotine through your skin. This reduces your craving for nicotine.
 - Zyban™ and Chantix® are also available to make it easier to quit. These are non-nicotine aids that can reduce withdrawal symptoms from nicotine.
- Try replacements for tobacco such as:
 - sugarless gum
 - hard candy
 - beef jerky
 - sunflower seeds
 - tobacco-free chew (commonly made of shredded mint leaves or coffee grounds).

Success at quitting is more likely when medicines, such as those listed above, are used with a support program.

Talk with your health care provider about the best treatment options, including amount or dose, for you.

Allina Health Resources

- Tobacco Intervention Program at Abbott Northwestern Hospital
— 612-863-1648
- Tobacco Intervention Program at Mercy Hospital
— 763-236-8008
- Tobacco Intervention Program at River Falls Area Hospital:
— 715-307-6075
- *Penny George™ Institute for Health and Healing (LiveWell Center) tobacco intervention coaching
— 612-863-5178
- *United Lung and Sleep Clinic Tobacco Cessation Program
— 651-726-6200

***There may be a cost to you.
Check with your insurance provider.**

Information adapted from the National Cancer Institute and the National Institutes of Health.