



Live Well, Work Well

Health and wellness tips for your work, home and life—brought to you by the insurance specialists at Veritas Risk Services

Smokeless tobacco products in the United States have no uniform manufacturing code and aren't regulated. This means they contain high levels of cancer-causing substances—and these high levels just keep increasing over time.

THE DANGERS OF SMOKELESS TOBACCO

Smokeless tobacco is often thought to be safer than smoking, and can even help you quit smoking. The truth is that there is no "safe" kind of tobacco—it is all dangerous to your health, and smokeless tobacco can even get you addicted to smoking instead of helping you quit.

Smokeless Tobacco

Smokeless tobacco is commonly found in the forms of chewing tobacco and snuff. While snuff may be inhaled through your nose, smokeless tobacco is generally placed between your gums and cheek and is sucked or chewed. Your saliva is then either spit or swallowed.

Nicotine Addiction

Smokeless tobacco causes the same addiction as smoking does—complete with cravings, tolerance and withdrawal symptoms. However, smokeless tobacco contains more nicotine than cigarettes. Nicotine is absorbed from your mouth tissue directly into your bloodstream and stays in your blood longer than it does in smokers.

Other Health Effects

Smokeless tobacco can cause many different health problems, especially in your mouth.

- **Cancer.** Users of smokeless tobacco are at an 80 percent higher risk for cancers of the mouth, throat, cheek, gums, lips and tongue. There is also an increased risk

for other cancers, particularly of the esophagus and pancreas.

- **Oral health.** About three-quarters of smokeless tobacco users develop leukoplakia, or white patches in your mouth that can lead to cancer. Smokeless tobacco can also lead to gum disease and tooth decay, not to mention stained teeth and bad breath.

Besides putting you at risk for cancer and other oral problems, smokeless tobacco increases your heart rate and blood pressure, putting you at risk for heart disease, stroke and other cancers.

How to Quit

There are many resources available for quitting smokeless tobacco. Start by calling the National Cancer Institute's quitline at 1-877-448-7848.

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