

# Spit It Out and ‘Can’ the Habit

## *What is smokeless tobacco?*

Smokeless tobacco has many names like snuff, dip, chew, and snus. The term smokeless tobacco is misleading as it makes the product sound ‘safe,’ or safer than cigarettes, but it is not! Nicotine is found in all tobacco products and is highly addictive which acts in the brain and throughout the body.



## *Why are we concerned about smokeless tobacco?*

Smokeless tobacco contains more nicotine than one cigarette! Holding an average-size dip in your mouth for 30 minutes gives a person as much nicotine as smoking 3 cigarettes. Using 2 cans a week gives you as much nicotine as smoking 10.5 packs a week.

## *What should you know about smokeless tobacco and your health?*

- Use can cause your gums to pull away from the teeth in the place where the tobacco is held. Your gums will not grow back.
- Sugar in spit tobacco can cause decay in exposed tooth roots.
- Leathery white patches and red sores are common in dippers and chewers and can turn into cancer.
- Use will stain your teeth.
- Recent research shows spit tobacco use can cause problems beyond your mouth (cancer of the tongue and cheek) - pancreatic cancer and/or the development of cardiovascular disease - heart disease and stroke - has also been shown.
- You can quit! Call 1-800-QUIT NOW or visit [QuitNow.net/Virginia](http://QuitNow.net/Virginia) for free support to quit tobacco use.

***For more information or help in quitting:*** Contact the Thomas Jefferson Health District’s Tobacco Control Coordinator at 434-422-4555.



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