



## Tobacco Facts for Oral Health

Individuals who use tobacco are four times more likely than people who have never used tobacco to have advanced gum (periodontal) disease. Continued use of tobacco affects teeth and gums and can lead to tooth decay, tooth loss and oral cancer, which kills one individual in the United States every hour of every day. Drinking alcohol in addition to using tobacco increases the likelihood of oral cancer even further. Men are 50% more likely to be diagnosed with oral cancer than women.

### How Smokeless Tobacco Affects Your Oral Health

- Increased risk of leukoplakia, a white patch on the inside of the mouth that does not rub off and is a risk factor for the development of oral cancer.
- Causes gums to recede due to the irritation of tobacco in your mouth.
- Increases risk of cavities and bad breath.
- Causes erosion of the enamel that protects your teeth.
- Suppresses the immune system's response to oral infection.

### How Smoking Affects Your Oral Health

- Higher likelihood of halitosis, or bad breath, and stained teeth.
- Increases the build up of plaque and tartar on your teeth.
- Increases risk of developing gum disease, a leading cause of tooth loss.
- Delays healing from tooth extraction, gum treatment or oral surgery.
- Cigar and pipe smoking can have the same adverse effects on oral health as cigarette smoking.
- Cigar smokers are at higher risk for bone loss.



**“** *lqmik and chewing tobacco can contribute to gum disease, cavities and oral cancer. One step towards good oral health is becoming tobacco-free.* **”**

– Sarah Shoffstall, DDS, MPH, Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium

# Tips to Help You Quit

## Why Should I Quit?

- 71% of adults in Alaska would like to quit tobacco.
- 93% of Alaska Native adults agree that every cigarette causes a smoker damage.
- The risk for heart disease is cut in half one year after quitting tobacco.
- In five years after quitting tobacco your risk for cancer of the mouth, throat and esophagus are cut in half.
- In ten years after quitting, your risk for developing lung cancer drops by 50%.

## How Do I Quit?

- Call Alaska's Tobacco Quit Line! The Quit Line is **FREE** for all Alaskans and is available by calling 1-800-QUIT NOW (1-800-784-8669) seven days a week, from 4 a.m. to 11 p.m. Quit Line services include phone counseling sessions and up to eight weeks of free nicotine replacement therapy, including the patch, gum or lozenge.
- Obtain support from friends and family. Ask Alaska's Tobacco Quit Line to send you the "Ally Guide."
- Contact your clinic to find out what tobacco resources are available in your area.
- Keep trying to quit! Most tobacco users make several quit attempts before staying quit for good.

**//** *This is my first day without my morning cigarette and I just didn't know how I was going to make it. But now, after talking to you, the craving that was so strong is completely gone. I feel normal again. It's really great that you guys are there for support I really appreciate it.* **//**

— Alaska's Tobacco Quit Line Caller

