



Facts About Smokeless Tobacco

Smokeless tobacco is consumed by placing a portion of the tobacco in the mouth rather than smoking it like cigarettes. Some examples of smokeless tobacco are Copenhagen, snuff, iqmik and snus. Males and females of all ages use smokeless tobacco. Smokeless tobacco is NOT a safe or natural alternative to cigarettes. There are 28 known carcinogens in smokeless tobacco as well as many health risks associated with its use.

Use of Smokeless Tobacco:

- The availability of nicotine in smokeless tobacco is more than twice that of cigarettes.
- The availability of nicotine in iqmik is more than double the amount of nicotine available in Copenhagen.
- In Alaska, 12% of adults and 14% of youth use smokeless tobacco.
- 20% of Alaska Native women use smokeless tobacco during pregnancy.
- The use of smokeless tobacco varies by region in Alaska; the highest rates of smokeless tobacco are found in the Western and Southwestern regions.

Health Effects of Smokeless Tobacco:

- Using smokeless tobacco while pregnant has been associated with an increased risk of preterm delivery and preeclampsia. It also has adverse effects on fetal development.
- Can cause cardiovascular disease and poor wound healing.
- Leads to gum disease and gingivitis.
- Increases risk of cavities, tooth loss, mouth, pancreatic, esophageal and stomach cancers.
- Chronic use of smokeless tobacco increases the risk of diabetes and high blood pressure.



“ You tell yourself that chewing is a safe alternative to smoking. If it is, why do you hide it? Why do you tell your daughter it's dangerous? Because it is. **”**

— Smokeless Tobacco User, Sitka, Alaska

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.

// *Everyone at the program is so kind. You're nonjudgmental and that is what REALLY makes a difference. Last Friday I was ashamed to call because I had failed. The guy I spoke with told me that it took him five tries to quit and knowing that really made me feel better. Thanks so much.* **//**

— Alaska's Tobacco Quit Line Caller

