



SMOKELESS TOBACCO – FAQs

WHAT IS SMOKELESS TOBACCO?

- Smokeless tobacco includes chew, dip, snuff, and a host of emerging products.
- Another product is snus, which are small, teabag-like pouches containing tobacco that users place between their upper gum and lip.
- New smokeless tobacco products like orbs (dissolvable tobacco pellets), toothpick-like sticks and dissolvable strips closely resemble gum, candy and breath strips.

WHY SHOULD I BE CONCERNED ABOUT SMOKELESS TOBACCO?

- Using smokeless tobacco can lead to nicotine addiction,¹ which has been proven to be as addictive as heroin and cocaine.² Adolescent bodies are also more sensitive to nicotine, and are more easily addicted than adults.³
- Users of smokeless tobacco products have higher risks for tobacco-related diseases than non-tobacco users:⁴
 - An 80 percent higher risk of oral cancers⁵
 - A 60 percent higher risk of pancreatic and esophageal cancer⁶
 - An increased risk of death from a heart attack or stroke^{7,8}
- There are at least 28 cancer-causing chemicals in chewing tobacco and snuff.⁹ Smokeless tobacco can also cause white or gray patches inside the mouth (leukoplakia) that can lead to cancer.¹⁰
- Smokeless tobacco also comes in many different types and flavors – like cinnamon, berry, vanilla and apple. Studies have shown that youth believe that flavored tobacco products are less harmful than non-flavored products.¹¹



- Rural areas have significantly higher rates of smokeless tobacco use than the Florida statewide percentage. In 2014, the statewide percentage of middle school students who reported using smokeless tobacco in the past 30 days was 1.9 percent, whereas the percentage in rural areas was 4.9 percent. The statewide percentage of high school students who reported use within the past 30 days was 5.1 percent, and the usage rate in rural areas was over double that amount (11.4 percent).¹²

HOW DOES THE TOBACCO INDUSTRY STAY COMPETITIVE?

- The tobacco industry in America is losing its customers. Not only are more tobacco users quitting, every day more than 1,300 people in the U.S. die from a smoking-related illness.¹³ Tobacco companies are looking for new customers, and because young people who use smokeless tobacco can become addicted to nicotine, they may be more likely to also become cigarette smoker.¹⁴
- U.S. Tobacco – a smokeless tobacco manufacturer – even developed a “graduation strategy” chart, which aimed to get new, young users addicted to nicotine by using what they referred to as “starter products.”¹⁵
- Tobacco companies have also introduced new dissolvable tobacco products that don’t look like traditional tobacco products, but instead closely resemble mints, breath strips and toothpicks. Many of these new products are also cheaper than cigarettes and traditional smokeless tobacco, thus making them appealing and accessible to youth.
- The U.S. tobacco industry* spent a total of \$503.2 million on advertising and promotion of smokeless tobacco alone in 2013 – a 15 percent increase from what was spent in 2012.¹⁶



- Tobacco companies place most of their advertising in convenience stores, where 75 percent of teens shop at least once per week.¹⁷ These companies strategically spend \$7.3 billion on marketing cigarettes and smokeless tobacco in convenience stores each year.¹⁸ It's also no coincidence that stores located near schools have nearly three times more tobacco advertisements.¹⁹

HOW CAN WE PROTECT YOUNG PEOPLE IN FLORIDA?

- In 2015, nearly two out of every 100 American middle school students (1.8 percent) and six of every 100 high school students reported currently using smokeless tobacco.²⁰
- While cigarette use among Florida's youth reached an all-time low in 2014, smokeless tobacco use among high school students has fluctuated but has not decreased compared to a decade ago. The rate of Florida high school students reporting current smokeless tobacco use in both 2005 and 2015 was 4.9 percent.²¹
- Educating young adults about the health effects of tobacco use can help change the social acceptability of tobacco use.
- Studies have shown that youth are influenced by tobacco use in sports.²² Professional baseball players, who have traditionally had high levels of smokeless tobacco use, serve as role models for impressionable youth.²³ While smokeless tobacco use has been banned in minor league baseball and in the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) since the early 1990s, it remains allowed in the major leagues.
- Tobacco Free Florida is a comprehensive tobacco prevention and cessation campaign.
 - The program funds community-level interventions in every county, which include supporting a local Students Working Against Tobacco (SWAT) chapter.
 - SWAT youth are empowered to educate their peers and community members about the dangers of tobacco and the historic marketing practices of the tobacco industry.



- SWAT youth across the state have been important advocates against candy-flavored tobacco and supporters of local resolutions urging tobacco retailers to restrict the sale and marketing of flavored tobacco products.

WHY ARE TOBACCO FREE POLICIES IMPORTANT?

- Research shows that tobacco free campus policies are effective. These policies significantly change attitudes toward tobacco.²⁴
 - As of April 2016, 24 colleges and universities in Florida have 100 percent tobacco free policies,²⁵ but more work can be done to increase this number.
- National, state and local program activities have been shown to reduce and prevent youth tobacco use when implemented together. They include the following:²⁶
 - Community programs, and school and college policies and interventions that encourage tobacco-free environments and lifestyles
 - Community programs that reduce tobacco advertising, promotions, and availability of tobacco products

* For the purpose of its reporting, the tobacco industry is defined by the American Federal Trade Commission as the following companies: Altria Group, North Atlantic Trading Company, Reynolds American, Swedish Match North America, and Swisher International Group.

¹ U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The Health Consequences of Smoking—50 Years of Progress: A Report of the Surgeon General. Atlanta: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Office on Smoking and Health, 2014 [accessed 2014 Oct 31].

² U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The Health Consequences of Smoking: Nicotine Addiction: A Report of the Surgeon General. Atlanta, GA: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Office on Smoking and Health, 1988.

³ U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The Health Consequences of Involuntary Exposure to Tobacco Smoke: A Report of the Surgeon General. Atlanta: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Coordinating Center for Health Promotion, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Office on Smoking and Health, 2006.

⁴ Boffetta, P, et al., "Smokeless tobacco and cancer," The Lancet 9:667-675, 2008.

⁵ Boffetta, P, et al., "Smokeless tobacco and cancer," The Lancet 9:667-675, 2008.

⁶ Boffetta, P, et al., "Smokeless tobacco and cancer," The Lancet 9:667-675, 2008.

⁷ Piano MR, Benowitz NL, Fitzgerald GA, Corbridge S, Heath J, Hahn E, et al. Impact of Smokeless Tobacco Products on Cardiovascular Disease: Implications for Policy, Prevention, and Treatment: A Policy Statement from the American Heart Association. Circulation 2010;122(15):1520–44 [cited 2014 Oct 31].

⁸ World Health Organization. IARC Monographs on the Evaluation of Carcinogenic Risks to Humans. Volume 89: Smokeless Tobacco and Some Tobacco-Specific N-Nitrosamines.[PDF–3.18 MB] Lyon (France): World Health Organization, International Agency for Research on Cancer, 2007.



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- ¹² Florida Youth Tobacco Survey (FYTS), Florida Department of Health, Bureau of Epidemiology, 2014.
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