

Big Tobacco's Dilemma?

No smoking laws, higher taxes, more health education and a general public outcry are all leading to a reduction in the number of people smoking cigarettes. That's a good thing for public health and a terrible thing for Big Tobacco company sales. Big Tobacco's solution? Snus.

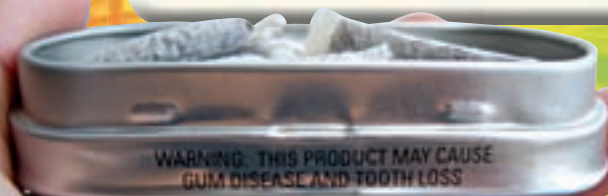
As cigarette revenues fall, Big Tobacco is scrambling to come up with their next addictive product line. Sales of moist snuff smokeless tobacco, such as Skoal® and Copenhagen®, have more than doubled in the last 20 years, while the use of chewing tobacco has declined. But the increase in moist snuff tobacco sales isn't enough to cover the lost revenue from cigarettes. The biggest drawback to these forms of spit tobacco? The spit. That's where snus comes in.

What is Snus?

Snus (rhymes with noose) is a moist powder tobacco that originated in Sweden. It comes in two forms: loose snus that a user "pinches" or snus enclosed in a tea bag-like pouch.

Users place the snus between their upper lip and gum. Unlike other forms of smokeless tobacco, snus users don't have to spit out nasty brown tobacco juice. For up to 30 minutes, they can keep snus in their mouths sucking nicotine and other carcinogens into their bodies.

To make snus, dried tobacco leaves are cured, ground into a fine power, and mixed with other chemicals. Since the FDA doesn't regulate tobacco, no one really knows what the tobacco companies are actually putting into their snus products. But there's one ingredient you know is in there: nicotine.



For More Information

Resources:

Office of the Surgeon General
<http://www.surgeongeneral.gov/tobacco>

Center for Disease Control
<http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco>

Quit Tobacco
<http://www.ucanquit2.org>

Quit Smokeless
<http://www.quitsmokeless.org>



Snus-Spitless Tobacco

*you snus,
you lose*



in the know

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What's in Snus? Nicotine.

Big Tobacco is in the business of selling addiction. Snus is their latest product designed to get you hooked, or keep you hooked, on **nicotine**. Nicotine is a highly addictive, alkaloid chemical found in tobacco. It is a poisonous, oily, yellow substance with a pungent odor and an acid taste. Nicotine mimics the affects of the brain chemical **acetylcholine**, a nerve signal transmitter that acts on the autonomic nervous system, which controls basic bodily functions such as the beating of the heart and breathing. In high doses (50 mg and higher), nicotine can lead to respiratory failure and paralysis. Small amounts of nicotine (around 3 mg in a single cigarette), can lead to nausea, dizziness, low blood pressure and heart palpitations.

When a person ingests nicotine, the drug immediately goes to work on the body, constricting blood vessels and increasing heart rate. It also goes to work in the brain, creating a false sense of well-being and alertness by increasing the levels of the neurotransmitter **dopamine**. As dopamine levels fall, the nicotine user wants more nicotine to maintain the "high," leading to a cycle of addiction. Without nicotine, an addict will suffer from withdrawal symptoms that include anxiety, irritability, heart rate and blood pressure changes, changes in brain waves and difficulty sleeping.

What Else is in Snus?

In addition to nicotine, there are all sorts of nasty chemicals in a pouch of snus, including:

- Nitrosamines (TSNA)—a deadly carcinogen
- N-Nitrosodimethylamine (NDMA)—a deadly carcinogen
- Benz(a)pyrene (BaP)—a deadly carcinogen
- Cadmium— a mineral that can damage the lungs, kidneys and bones
- Lead— a poisonous metal that damages the nervous system
- Arsenic—a deadly poison
- Nickel— an allergy causing metal with potential carcinogenic properties
- Chromium— a toxic and carcinogenic metal



did you know?

In the US, oral cancer is diagnosed in approximately 30,000 patients each year and is responsible for about 8,000 deaths.

Is Snus Safer Than Cigarettes?

For years, Big Tobacco has been trying to come up with a product that is perceived as safer than cigarettes. The jury is still out as to whether snus is safer in the long run than cigarette smoking. There have been several studies that show lower amounts of toxic chemicals are ingested when using snus as compared to cigarettes. Since snus is not inhaled, the lungs are not affected the way they are with smoking cigarettes, so lung cancer is less likely. There are, however, other health concerns related to snus use— oral cancer, for example. Snus use increases the risk of developing lesions in the mouth, gum recession and the potential for cancer of the mouth or tongue. A recent study determined that using snus doubles the risk of getting pancreatic cancer. Snus use has also been linked to an increase in cardiovascular disease, including high blood pressure and the increased possibility of having a heart attack. Since snus is a new product in the United States, there haven't been many studies on the long-term health effects.

So is snus safer than smoking cigarettes? Maybe. But all it takes is one tobacco-induced life threatening disease to end your life. Snus, spit tobacco or cigarettes... the best bet is to avoid tobacco in all its forms.



Quit or Don't Start.

Using snus is a bad idea. Not only is it another way to get you hooked on nicotine so you'll give your money to Big Tobacco, but it's also full of cancer-causing chemicals that may lead to mouth cancer, pancreatic cancer and heart disease. Oh, and if you do get hooked on snus, there's a good chance you'll smoke cigarettes too.

If you use tobacco, it's time to quit. There are lots of resources out there to help you kick the habit. Don't give up! Many tobacco addicts have to try several times before they're successful. The best way to ensure you'll quit is to get help (see the resources on the back of this pamphlet). If you aren't addicted to nicotine, stay that way. Avoid tobacco products like snus.

**Live Smart.
Live Long.
Live Tobacco Free.**