



Health

Tobacco and Oral Health

Tobacco in any form is bad for your health

In this brochure:

- Tobacco increases your risk for gum disease and tooth loss
- E-cigarettes and vaping devices can contain the same toxic ingredients as cigarettes
- Smokeless tobacco and hookahs contain nicotine and other hazardous chemicals
- Reasons to quit using tobacco and tips to help you succeed

ADA Healthy Smile Tips

- Brush your teeth twice a day with a fluoride toothpaste.
- Clean between your teeth daily.
- Eat a healthy diet that limits sugary beverages and snacks.
- See your dentist regularly for prevention and treatment of oral disease.

For more information about taking care of your mouth and teeth, visit MouthHealthy.org, the ADA's website just for patients.



Nicotine stain photo courtesy of Othman Shibly, DDS, MS, School of Dental Medicine, University at Buffalo, State University of New York

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Do You Use Tobacco?

You are probably aware that tobacco may cause cancer, stroke and heart disease, but did you know that it can also cause serious harm to your mouth?

It doesn't matter how you use it — whether you smoke, vape, dip or chew — tobacco is not good for you. Talk with your dentist or physician about ways to quit.

Using Any Form of Tobacco is Risky.

Cigarettes, pipes and cigars

Smoking traditional tobacco products like cigarettes, pipes and cigars may cause serious health issues to your mouth and throat. Cigarette smoke has more than 7,000 chemicals and chemical compounds, like carbon monoxide and arsenic. At least 70 of them are known to cause cancer, including mouth or throat cancer.

Smoking is also linked to:

- Gum disease
- Heart disease
- Stroke
- Lung disease
- Problems with pregnancy
- Birth defects



Smoking causes stains that can only be removed by a licensed dental professional.

What Happens to Your Mouth When You Use Tobacco?

Overall, tobacco can negatively affect all parts of your health, including your mouth. It can lead to gum disease and tooth loss. Your teeth and tongue can become brown and stained. You can also have bad breath that doesn't go away and can get mouth sores. Using tobacco also slows down healing after dental treatments.



Sores, gums that pull away from teeth, and stains often result from using smokeless tobacco.



Tobacco users are at higher risk of gum disease, which can lead to tooth loss.

E-cigarettes and Vaping Devices

Many people are turning to e-cigarettes and vaping devices because they believe they are a safer and healthier choice than traditional tobacco products. But, there is no current evidence to show that e-cigarettes and vaping devices are any safer than regular tobacco products.

The same toxic ingredients that are in cigarettes have also been found in the vapor of e-cigarettes. There are thousands of brands and types of vaping liquids on the market and there is little regulation on the levels of carcinogens. They all have different ingredients and different amounts of nicotine in them, so there isn't a clear way to know what chemicals and how much nicotine you are inhaling every time you vape. Studies show that e-cigarettes with flavorings can also cause painful gum irritation.

If you are addicted to nicotine, it will be difficult to stop using e-cigarettes.

According to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), from 2017 to 2018, e-cigarette use went up **78% among high school students and 48% among middle school students.**



Smokeless Tobacco

Smokeless tobacco (also called chewing tobacco, spit, dip, snuff, snus or chew) contains more than 3,000 chemicals, including at least 28 cancer-causing ingredients. You may think that "smokeless" means "harmless," but this is not true.

Any kind of tobacco can harm your health.

In fact, if you use smokeless tobacco, you can take in a large amount of nicotine and cancer-causing chemicals without even lighting up.

The nicotine in smokeless tobacco is swallowed or absorbed through blood vessels in your mouth. Holding an average-sized dip in your mouth for 30 minutes gives you as much nicotine as smoking three cigarettes, making it very addictive and hard to quit.

Did You Know?

American teens and tweens who use e-cigarettes are more than **4 times as likely to try a regular cigarette** compared to those who never tried e-cigarettes.



Waterpipes (Hookahs)

Smoking waterpipes, or hookahs, has been linked to many of the same health problems as smoking cigarettes. They also pack a tobacco punch. A hookah smoking session could last as long as 60 minutes.

There are many types of hookah tobacco available, so you can't know how much nicotine and other dangerous chemicals are in it every time you smoke. Water filtration does not limit the harmful effects of tobacco.

Did You Know?

According to the CDC, a person puffs on a cigarette an average of 20 times, but **they may take 200 puffs during an hour-long hookah session.**



200
puffs/hour

Why Quit Using Tobacco?

- **Your mouth will be healthier.** Quitting tobacco can lower your risk for gums that pull away from your teeth, gum disease, bone loss of the jaw and tooth loss.
- **You will look and feel better.** Bad breath, stained teeth that cannot be cleaned by brushing and drooling are all results of using tobacco.
- **You will save money.** The amount you spend each week on tobacco can add up to hundreds, even thousands, of dollars a year.
- **You will set a healthy example.** Be a role model for your family and friends, especially children. You may even inspire others to give up tobacco when you quit.

Tips to Quit Tobacco



- **Make a list** of your own personal reasons for quitting.
- **Set a date to quit** in the near future and stick to it. Choose a "low stress" time to quit.
- **Don't do it alone** — ask your dentist, physician, family, friends and coworkers for their support in helping you quit.
- **Ask your dentist or physician about products** that may help your body gradually get used to life without nicotine.
- **Find a healthy substitute** when you have a tobacco craving, such as sugarless gum, sugar-free hard candy, sunflower seeds or carrot sticks.
- **Think about the 4 Ds** when you crave tobacco:
 - **Delay** — the craving will pass in 5–10 minutes.
 - **Drink water** — it gives you something to hold in your hands and put in your mouth.
 - **Do something else** — distract yourself by being active.
 - **Deep breathing** — deeply breathing in and out will help relax you.

Resources to Quit Tobacco

- **www.smokefree.gov**
This website provides a Step-By-Step Quit Guide and other tools to help you quit.
- **www.cdc.gov/tips**
This website provides stories and tips on how to quit from former smokers.
- **www.cdc.gov/quit**
This website has resources to help you quit, like access to Quitlines and the quitSTART app.
- **National Network of Tobacco Cessation Quitlines**
1-800-QUITNOW (1-800-784-8669)
1-800-332-8615 (TTY)
Callers can speak with a counselor in your state, as well as receive information and referrals to other helpful sources.