



Florida Health Mission:

To protect, promote
& improve the health
of all people
in Florida through
integrated state, county,
& community efforts.

Rick Scott
Governor

John H. Armstrong, MD, FACS
Surgeon General & Secretary



Florida Department of Health

Office of the State Surgeon General
4052 Bald Cypress Way, Bin A00
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-1701
PHONE: 850/245-4444
FAX: 850/922-9453

www.floridashealth.com
TWITTER: HealthyFLA
FACEBOOK: FLDepartmentofHealth
YOUTUBE: fldoh

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

February 11, 2013

Contact:

DOH Office of Communications
(850) 245-4111
or Naylet Aguayo
media@tobaccofreeflorida.com
(305) 572-2141

When It Comes to Tobacco, Smokeless Does Not Mean Harmless

~ Tobacco Free Florida is Raising Awareness During Through With Chew Week ~

TALLAHASSEE — Tobacco products like chew, dip and snuff are not harmless. But because they're smokeless, youth and adults may underestimate the serious health risks associated with these products. In fact, while cigarette use continues to decline, smokeless tobacco use has remained steady among Florida's youth for more than a decade.

To help raise awareness about the dangers of smokeless tobacco, the Florida Department of Health's Bureau of Tobacco Free Florida will observe Through With Chew Week from Feb.17-23.

"Some youth may mistakenly believe that when they start smoking or use any tobacco product, they are able to quit very easily," said State Surgeon General and Secretary of Health Dr. John Armstrong. "This type of addiction is very hard to break, and the health risks are extremely high for any tobacco product."

Health Risks

Constant exposure to tobacco juices from these smokeless products can cause oral cancers, which can form within just five years of regular use,ⁱ and can cause cancer of the esophagus, pharynx, larynx, stomach and pancreas.ⁱⁱ Smokeless tobacco use can increase the risk of oral cancers by 80 percent and the risk of pancreatic and esophageal cancer by 60 percent, according to a 2008 study from the World Health Organization (WHO) International Agency for Research on Cancer.ⁱⁱⁱ

Aside from the increased risk of cancer, using smokeless tobacco can increase the risk of heart attack and stroke.^{iv} It can lead to other oral problems such as mouth sores, gum recession, tooth decay, and permanent discoloration of teeth.^v

Smokeless tobacco use can also increase the risk of reproductive health problems such as reduced sperm count and abnormal sperm cells for men. Women who use smokeless tobacco may be at an increased risk of preeclampsia (a condition that may include high blood pressure, fluid retention, and swelling), premature birth, and low birth weight.^{vi}

Addiction

Like cigarettes, smokeless tobacco products contain nicotine, a highly addictive and dangerous chemical. Smokeless tobacco users and cigarette smokers have comparable levels of nicotine in the blood, according to the National Cancer Institute.^{vii}

Tobacco Free Florida has three ways to help smokeless tobacco users quit. Those who want to quit can double their chances at success by using one of these free and convenient quit services. For more information, visit www.tobaccofreeflorida.com.

For more information on smokeless tobacco, visit

www.tobaccofreeflorida.com/smokelesstobacco.

ABOUT THROUGH WITH CHEW WEEK

This national annual health observance was established by the American Academy of Otolaryngology — Head and Neck Surgery as an educational campaign designed to prevent and reduce the use of smokeless tobacco. Through With Chew Week is now recognized by public health groups across the country. The week includes the Great American Spit Out on Thursday, Feb. 21, which encourages smokeless tobacco users to plan in advance to quit using smokeless tobacco that day, or to use the day to make a plan to quit.

ABOUT TOBACCO FREE FLORIDA

DOH's Tobacco Free Florida campaign is a statewide cessation and prevention campaign funded by Florida's tobacco settlement fund.

Tobacco users interested in quitting are encouraged to use one of the state's three ways to quit. To learn about Tobacco Free Florida and the state's free quit resources, visit www.tobaccofreeflorida.com or follow the campaign on Facebook at www.facebook.com/TobaccoFreeFlorida or Twitter at www.twitter.com/tobaccofreefla.

DOH works to protect, promote and improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county and community efforts.

###

ⁱ The S.T.O.P. Guide (The Smokeless Tobacco Outreach and Prevention Guide): A Comprehensive Directory of Smokeless Tobacco Prevention and Cessation Resources. Applied Behavioral Science Press, 1997; Hatsukami, D & Severson, H, "Oral Spit Tobacco: Addiction, Prevention and Treatment," Nicotine & Tobacco Research 1:21-44, 1999

ⁱⁱ , National Cancer Institute, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Stockholm Centre of Public Health. Smokeless Tobacco Fact Sheets. Third International Conference on Smokeless Tobacco; Stockholm. September 22–25, 2002

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

^{iv} Boffetta, P, et al. "Use of smokeless tobacco and risk of myocardial infarction and stroke: systematic review with meta-analysis," BMJ, 2009; 339 (aug18 2): b3060 DOI: 10.1136/bmj.b3060

^v Tomar, SL. "Chewing Tobacco Use and Dental Caries Among U.S. Men," Journal of the American Dental Association, 1999, 130: 160.

^{vi} World Health Organization. Smokeless Tobacco and Some Tobacco-Specific N-Nitrosamines. International Agency for Research on Cancer Monographs on the Evaluation of Carcinogenic Risks to Humans Vol. 89. Lyon, France: World Health Organization, 2007

^{vii} National Cancer Institute. Smokeless Tobacco or Health: An International Perspective. Bethesda, MD: National Cancer Institute; 1992. Smoking and Tobacco Control Monograph 2.