

**DRUG  
DEMAND  
REDUCTION**

# Did You Know?

## TOBACCO & NICOTINE

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**Tobacco is a carrier for the highly addictive drug nicotine. Once your body gets a taste for nicotine, it can quickly become a life-long addiction, with extremely fatal consequences.**



**AKA** (Cigarettes) smokes, cigs or butts. (Smokeless tobacco) chew, dip, spit tobacco, snus or snuff

**What is it?** Nicotine is the main drug in all forms of tobacco. Nicotine is one of the most heavily used and most addictive drugs in the U.S.

**The Risks:** Whether smoked or chewed, nicotine is one of the most highly addictive drugs used in today's society. And once you're hooked, it's extremely hard to overcome this addiction. Surveys have shown that most adult smokers first tried cigarettes during their teen years, and there is a direct relationship between early smoking and adult addiction.

Smoking harms your immune system and can affect nearly every organ of your body. The nicotine gets you hooked, but it's the other chemicals in tobacco like carbon monoxide, tar, formaldehyde, cyanide and ammonia that cause the major damage--many of these are known carcinogens (cancer-causing poisons). Carbon monoxide keeps red blood cells from getting the full load of oxygen needed for healthy cellular growth. This encourages the carcinogens in tobacco to bind to the cells throughout your body and cause cellular damage.

Chewing or sniffing tobacco is just as dangerous as smoking and also has a high risk of addiction. And prolonged use of smokeless tobacco leads to a high risk of cancers of the mouth.

E-Cigarettes and Vapor are still being studied for long-term health concerns. Early studies have found toxic chemicals, including an ingredient used in antifreeze and formaldehyde in e-cigarettes. Because the FDA doesn't regulate these products, there aren't requirements around ingredient disclosure, warning labels or youth access restrictions. A 2014 study showed wide-ranging nicotine levels in e-cigarettes and inconsistencies between listed and actual nicotine levels in these products.

**LONG-TERM EFFECTS:** You probably already know that the greatest long-term risk of smoking is cancer and lung disease. Here are some numbers to consider: In the 40 years between 1964 and 2004, cigarette smoking caused an estimated 12 million deaths, including 4.1 million deaths from cancer, 5.5 million deaths from cardiovascular disease, 1.1 million deaths from respiratory disease and 94,000 infant deaths related to mothers smoking during pregnancy. In 2010, more than 220,000 new cases of lung cancer were reported, and more than 150,000 Americans died as a direct result of the disease.

**THE BOTTOM LINE:** Smoking tobacco and smokeless tobacco are both carriers of the highly addictive drug nicotine. Once your body gets a taste for nicotine, it can easily become a life-long addiction, with highly fatal consequences. Although quitting can be difficult at any age, the good news is that by giving up tobacco for life, you can drastically improve your health and reduce your risk of cancer, heart disease and other life-threatening diseases associated with tobacco use.

Source of Information: CDC, American Lung Association