

SMOKELESS TOBACCO

What Is The Problem With Smokeless Tobacco?

From 1976 to 1990, the percentage of American adults smoking cigarettes declined 11%. Although this may sound positive, the number of American adults using smokeless tobacco (plug, leaf, and snuff) is on the rise. The greatest cause of concern is the increase in the use of “dipping” snuff.

Chewing tobacco puts you at higher risk of oral cancer and other health problems. Some reports have stated that children as young as 4th grade are using smokeless tobacco regularly. Dental and medical professionals are trying to help educate the public about the serious health risks involved with using smokeless tobacco. Meanwhile, tobacco companies suggest smokeless tobacco to be a safe alternative to cigarette smoking.

What Are The True Facts?

- All types of tobacco use are a known cause of cancer.
- Snuff contains carcinogenic nitrosamines, which have tumor initiating properties in animals.
- Lead and Cadmium and other heavy metals have been found in smokeless tobacco products at levels that could be harmful to a fetus.
- Benign oral lesions may occur after only a few years of smokeless tobacco use.
- Gingival recession is a common result of smokeless tobacco use.
- The Advisory Committee to the Surgeon General has concluded that the oral use of smokeless tobacco results in a significant health risk – one that can cause cancer.

How Can My Dentist Help?

Educating patients about the potential dangers is the first step in eradicating the use of smokeless tobacco. As your health professional, we are here to assist you.