

# BE IN THE KNOW: SMOKELESS OR SPIT TOBACCO



You don't smoke it. All you do is dip or chew and spit out the brown gunk. It can't be as bad as inhaling tobacco smoke into your lungs, right? **WRONG** . . . the fact is, putting smokeless tobacco products in your mouth is dangerous for your health, too.<sup>1</sup>

## SMOKELESS DOESN'T MEAN HARMLESS

Smokeless or spit tobacco comes in several forms:

- snuff (moist and dry),
- loose leaf (chewing tobacco),
- plug (looks like a brownie), and
- twist (looks like a twisted rope)

Other forms of smokeless tobacco products such as lozenges, tablets, tabs, strips, and sticks have also been developed. These products contain tobacco, too, and are also addictive and harmful.<sup>2,3</sup>

## SO, WHAT IS IN THE STUFF THAT MAKES IT SO BAD?

Smokeless tobacco has more than 2500 chemical compounds and 28 are known to cause cancer.<sup>2,3</sup>

Just like cigarette smoking, smokeless tobacco is addictive. In fact each pinch of moist snuff can contain the same amount of nicotine as two to five cigarettes.<sup>3</sup>

## WHAT CAN SMOKELESS TOBACCO DO TO ME?

Besides bad breath and yellowish-brown stains on your teeth, you can get mouth sores (about 70 percent of spit tobacco users have them).<sup>1</sup> Smokeless tobacco also causes many other oral health problems such as tooth decay, gum disease, and white patches called leukoplakia.<sup>3</sup> According to the Mayo Clinic, spit tobacco users are from four to seven times more likely to get oral cancer than non-users.

Using spit tobacco also hurts athletic performance — the nicotine in spit tobacco narrows blood vessels, raises blood pressure, and makes the heart work harder.

There's no such thing as a "safe" tobacco product.

If you or someone you know wants to quit smoking or dipping, please call:



QuitlineNC.com

1-800-QUIT-NOW

Content sources:

<sup>1</sup>KidsHealth.org. Smokeless Tobacco, July 2009.

<sup>2</sup> World Health Organization. Smokeless Tobacco and Some Tobacco-Specific N-Nitrosamines . (PDF-3.18 MB) International Agency for Research on Cancer Monographs on the Evaluation of Carcinogenic Risks to Humans Vol. 89. Lyon, France: World Health Organization, 2007 [accessed 2009 April 27].

<sup>3</sup>Office on Smoking and Health, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion. Smokeless Tobacco Fact Sheets, September 2009.

## About the Tobacco Prevention and Control Branch (TPC)

*The North Carolina Tobacco Prevention and Control Branch works to improve the health of North Carolina residents by promoting smoke-free environments and tobacco-free lifestyles. Our goal is to build capacity of diverse organizations and communities to implement and carry out effective, culturally appropriate strategies to reduce deaths and health problems due to tobacco use and secondhand smoke.*



## About TRU:

TRU is North Carolina's youth-led grassroots movement that has helped bring our state's teen smoking rates to the lowest on record. TRU stands for Tobacco.Reality.Unfiltered. And our name says a lot about us — we bring home the reality of tobacco use and are on our way to creating the state's first tobacco-free generation. The TRU movement rallies teens to take a stand against tobacco and get the message out there in any way possible, whether it's by working with the media, encouraging local businesses to go tobacco-free or holding a "cigarette butts pick-up" event.

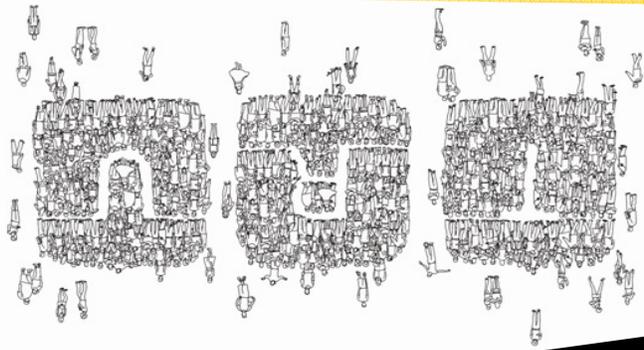
To find out more about TRU, please visit:



TOBACCO REALITY UNFILTERED

REALITYUNFILTERED.COM

**TRU IS MAKING A DIFFERENCE.** For more information about **TRU** in your community and how you can get involved, contact me to learn more:



State of North Carolina | Department of Health and Human Services  
 Division of Public Health | Tobacco Prevention and Control Branch  
[www.ncdhhs.gov](http://www.ncdhhs.gov) | [www.pubhealth.nc.gov](http://www.pubhealth.nc.gov)  
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*Join the movement*

**WE ARE A  
 FORCE OF  
 TOBACCO-FREE  
 GOODNESS**



**WHAT WILL YOU DO AS A TRU TEEN?**

It's official: teen smoking is now at an all-time low. Across the state, teens are making sweeping changes. And you can help. As a TRU teen you will:

- Encourage others to become tobacco-free,
- Educate your peers,
- Speak to community leaders and decision makers,
- Meet with other teens in your region and across the state, and
- Develop fun, creative activities.



Meet New People

Express Yourself

Build Your Resume

Show You Care



CONTACT INFORMATION:  
 TRU is making a difference. Contact me to learn more:

INSERT COORDINATOR NAME 

INSERT AGENCY NAME and ADDRESS 

INSERT PHONE NUMBER 

INSERT EMAIL ADDRESS 

**BE TRU**  
 TAKE THE PLEDGE

**STAY TRU**  
 SPREAD THE MESSAGE

**LIVE TRU**  
 GET INVOLVED