



Smokeless Tobacco Facts

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Forms of Smokeless Tobacco

The two main types of smokeless tobacco in the United States are **chewing tobacco** and **snuff**.^{1,2}

Chewing tobacco comes in the form of loose leaf, plug, or twist.^{2,3,4}

Form	Description	Use	Market Share*
Loose leaf	Cured tobacco strips typically sweetened and packaged in foil pouches	Piece taken from pouch and placed between cheek and gums	24.1%
Plug	Cured tobacco leaves pressed together into a cake or "plug" form and wrapped in a tobacco leaf	Piece taken from pouch and placed between cheek and gums	0.7%
Twist (or roll)	Cured tobacco leaves (often flavored) twisted together to resemble rope	Piece cut off from twist and placed between cheek and gums	0.4%

*Percentage of U.S. market for smokeless tobacco products⁵

Snuff is finely ground tobacco that can be dry, moist, or packaged in sachets.^{2,3,4}

Form	Description	Use	Market Share*

Moist	Cured and fermented tobacco processed into fine particles and often packaged in round cans	Pinch or "dip" is placed between cheek or lip and gums	73.2%
Dry	Fire-cured tobacco processed into a powder	Pinch of powder is taken orally or inhaled through the nostrils	1.5%
Sachets	Moist snuff packaged in ready-to-use pouches that resemble small tea bags	Sachet is placed between cheek or teeth and gums	Data unavailable

*Percentage of U.S. market for smokeless tobacco products⁵

Although some forms of snuff can be used by sniffing or inhaling into the nose,² most smokeless tobacco users place the product between their gum and cheek.³ Users suck or chew on the tobacco, and saliva can be spat out or swallowed.^{3,4} The tobacco industry has also developed newer smokeless tobacco products such as lozenges, tablets, tabs, strips, and sticks.^{4,6}

Health Effects

Smokeless Tobacco and Cancer

- Smokeless tobacco contains 28 cancer-causing agents (carcinogens).^{2,4}
- Smokeless tobacco is a known cause of human cancer; it increases the risk of developing cancer of the oral cavity and pancreas.^{4,7}

Smokeless Tobacco and Oral Health

- Smokeless tobacco is also strongly associated with leukoplakia—a precancerous lesion of the soft tissue in the mouth that consists of a white patch or plaque that cannot be scraped off.³

- Smokeless tobacco is associated with recession of the gums, gum disease, and tooth decay.^{3,6}

Smokeless Tobacco and Reproductive Health

- Smokeless tobacco use during pregnancy increases the risks for preeclampsia (i.e., a condition that may include high blood pressure, fluid retention, and swelling), premature birth, and low birth weight.⁴
- Smokeless tobacco use by men causes reduced sperm count and abnormal sperm cells.⁴

Smokeless Tobacco and Nicotine Addiction

- Smokeless tobacco use can lead to nicotine addiction and dependence.^{2,4}
- Adolescents who use smokeless tobacco are more likely to become cigarette smokers.³

Smokeless Tobacco Use in the United States

Smokeless tobacco use in the United States is higher among—

- Young white males
- American Indians/Alaska Natives
- People living in southern and north central states, and
- People who are employed in blue collar occupations or service/laborer jobs or who are unemployed⁸

Adults and Smokeless Tobacco

Current Smokeless Tobacco Users⁹

- 3.3% of adults (aged 18 years and older)
- 6.5% of men
- 0.4% of women
- 7.0% of American Indian/Alaska Natives
- 4.3% of whites
- 1.3% of Hispanics
- 0.7% of African Americans
- 0.6% of Asian Americans

High School Students and Smokeless Tobacco

Current Smokeless Tobacco Users¹⁰

- 7.9% of all high school students
- 13.4% of male high school students
- 2.3% of female high school students
- 10.3% of white high school students
- 4.7% of Hispanic high school students
- 1.2% of African-American high school students

Middle School Students and Smokeless Tobacco

Current Smokeless Tobacco Users¹¹

- 2.6% of middle school students
- 4.1% of male middle school students
- 1.2% of female middle school students
- 3.4% of Hispanic middle school students
- 2.8% of white middle school students
- 2.0% of Asian middle school students
- 1.7% of African-American middle school students

NOTE: For all data above, "current" user is defined as using smokeless tobacco products on 1 or more of the 30 days preceding the survey.

Tobacco Industry Information

The five largest tobacco manufacturers have spent record amounts of money on smokeless tobacco advertising and promotions:¹

- \$354.12 million in 2006
- \$250.79 million in 2005

The two leading smokeless tobacco brands for users aged 12 years or older are—

- Skoal® (with 25% of the market share) and
- Copenhagen® (with 24% of the market share).⁵

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For Further Information

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion

Office on Smoking and Health

E-mail: tobaccoinfo@cdc.gov

Phone: 1-800-CDC-INFO

Media Inquiries: Contact CDC's Office on Smoking and Health press line at 770-488-5493.

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Centers for Disease Control and Prevention 1600 Clifton Rd. Atlanta, GA

30333, USA

800-CDC-INFO (800-232-4636) TTY: (888) 232-6348, 24 Hours/Every Day -

cdcinfo@cdc.gov

