

Chewing Tobacco - Myths and Facts

Myth: Spit tobacco is a harmless alternative to smoking.

Truth: Spit tobacco is still tobacco. In tobacco are nitrosamines, cancer-causing chemicals from the curing process. Note the warnings on the cans.

Myth: Dip (or chew) improves my athletic performance.

Truth: A study of professional baseball players found no connection between spit tobacco use and player performance. Using spit tobacco increases your heart rate and blood pressure within a few minutes. This can cause a buzz or rush, but the rise in pulse and blood pressure places extra stress on your heart. That may actually reduce your overall performance.

Myth: Good gum care can offset the harmful effects of using dip or chew.

Truth: There is no evidence that brushing and flossing will undo the harm that dip and chew are doing to your teeth and gums.

Myth: If you dip or chew for only 5 to 10 years, you won't get cancer.

Truth: Long-term users are more likely to develop cancer, but they are not the only ones at risk. Cancers have been found in the mouths of guys who have used the product regularly for as few as six years.

Myth: It's easy to quit using dip or chew when you want to.

Truth: Unfortunately, nicotine addiction makes quitting difficult. But those who have quit successfully are very glad they did.