SPIT TOBACCO & SPITLESS TOBACCO
Spit tobacco (often called smokeless by the tobacco industry) is being marketed as a “safe” alternative to smoking, but...

SMOKELESS IS NOT HARMLESS!
Spit Tobacco

- Chewing tobacco
  - Loose leaf
  - Plugs
  - Twists
What is spit tobacco?

- Snuff – finely ground tobacco, pinch or pouch placed between the cheek and gum
  - Loose leaf in pouches
  - Dry
  - Moist
Other “Smokeless” Products

- Ariva
- Exalt
- Revel
Chemicals in Spit Tobacco

- Cadmium (car batteries)
- Polonium 210 (nuclear waste)
- Lead (banned from paint products)
- Formaldehyde (embalming fluid)
- Arsenic (rat poison)
- Cyanide (used in the gas chamber)
- Nitrosamines (potent cancer-causing agents)
Chemicals in Spit Tobacco

- Nickel
- Nicotine
- Pesticides
- Flavoring Agents
- Acetaldehyde
- Benzopyrene (cancer-causing)
- Hydrazine
- Uranium 235 and 238

Over 30 metals
Spit tobacco has over 3,000 chemicals including 28 known carcinogens.
Spit Tobacco Health Issues

- Nicotine addiction
- Increased heart rate
- Stroke
- High blood pressure
- Delayed wound healing
- Peptic ulcer disease
- Low birth weight babies
An average size “dip” of spit tobacco in the mouth for 30 minutes delivers as much nicotine as three cigarettes.
Spit Tobacco Health Issues

- Leukoplakia (pre-cancer)
- Oral Lesions
- Oral cancer (50 times more likely)
- Throat cancer
Spit Tobacco Health Issues

- Tongue cancer
- Lip cancer
- Gum disease
- Receding gums
- Decayed dental root surfaces
- Cavities
Oral Health Effects of Spit Tobacco Usage

- Stained teeth, lips and tongue
- Tooth decay
- Tooth loss
- Drooling
- Bad breath
Too Much Spit?
Spit tobacco users are SIX TIMES more likely than non-users to get mouth or throat cancer AND only about half of the people diagnosed with these cancers are alive after FIVE YEARS.
Why Oral Tobacco Use is Increasing

• Increased smoking restrictions
• Positive macho advertising images
• Milder and sweeter brands
• “Harm reduction,” “risk reduction,” and/or “exposure reduction”
What is Swedish Snus?

• Ground tobacco dating from the late 1700’s
• Moist (more than 50% water), “easy to use”
• Swedish snus contains four main ingredients - tobacco, of course and
  – Water
  – Salt
  – Humectants (to preserve moisture)
  – Flavor Additives
What is Swedish Snus?

- Placed under *upper* lip
- Typically, no need for spitting
- Snus is steam-cured (rather than fire-cured)
- Not fermented
- Contains no added sugar
- Manufactured primarily in Sweden and Norway

Mini Pouch Snus
What is Swedish Snus?

- Low concentrations of TSNA (cancer causing)
- Low levels of toxins
- High pH (7.5-8.5) results in “free” or unbound nicotine
- High delivery of nicotine
Kinds of Snus

• Loose-weight

• Portion-packed
  – Pouched
  – White
  – Mini (0.5g – 20 pieces per tin)*
  – Large (1g – 24 pieces per tin)
  – Maxi (1.7g – 17 pieces per tin)

* A favorite of women
Swedish Snus
American Snus
How is American Snus Different?

- Smaller portion sizes (.23g)
- Pasteurized
- Utilizes flavor-film technology
- Is dry – 12% moisture
- Low pH – less “free” nicotine
Why does Marlboro Snus deliver so little nicotine?

- Test market consumers
- New products – graduation method
- “Vaccinate” U.S. smokers against switching to snus
- Encourage “dual” usage
- Perceived reduction of litigation risks
Other Differences

- Sweden has a rigorous system of controls
  - Manufacture
  - Shipping
  - Storage
- Sweden does not permit marketing and advertising of snus or any other tobacco product
So how is snus being marketed?

• Refrigerators on the front counter
  “A customer can’t help but ask about the product.”

• Coupons
  “There was a huge amount of coupon drop...stores were selling 11.1 packs per store per week...sales continually declined to a low of 2.3 packs per store per week [after coupon distribution stopped].”

• Promotional price allowances to customers
  (Cut from $2.50 to $1.79/pack)
So how is snus being marketed?

- Promotions to retailers from manufacturers – free trials and bundles
- Communication at store level
  “The best method to get people to try it is via our cashiers...managers make sure cashiers are engaging the customer.”
- Promoting harm reduction
- Internet

Convenience Store News
The “new” target?
RJR (Camel) Adds Test Cities

- Atlanta
- Baltimore/Washington
- Chicago
- Los Angeles
- Miami
- Minneapolis/St. Paul
- New York City
- Oakland/San Francisco
- Seattle

All Have Smoke Free Ordinances
What do the tobacco industry "fat cats" say?
• “It’s becoming more socially acceptable.”
  Dan Butler, President
  U.S. Smokeless Tobacco

• “…[snus is] an effort to create a different tobacco category in the United States.”
  Tommy Payne, Vice President
  R.J. Reynolds

• “It’s the smoke stupid.”
  Tommy Payne, Vice President
  R.J. Reynolds
So what about “harm reduction?”
What does the tobacco industry say about smokeless tobacco, illness and disease?
“...it is USSTC’s position that smokeless tobacco has not been shown to be a cause of any human disease.”
“... the views of Swedish Match on ... Swedish snus ... Swedish snus does not increase the risk of dysplastic changes and is not a risk factor for oral or gastric cancer.”
What does the vast majority of the public health community say about spit tobacco, illness and disease?
The oral use of smokeless tobacco represents a significant health risk. It is not a safe substitute for smoking cigarettes.

It can cause cancer and a number of noncancerous oral conditions.

It can lead to nicotine addiction and dependence.

Surgeon General C. Everett Koop On Smokeless Tobacco (1986)
• “... I cannot conclude that the use of any tobacco product is a safer alternative to smoking.”

• “There is no significant scientific evidence that suggests smokeless tobacco is a safer alternative to cigarettes.”

• “Smokeless tobacco does cause cancer.”

• “As Surgeon General I cannot recommend use of a product that causes disease and death as a ‘lesser evil' to smoking.”

• “... any public health recommendation that positions smokeless tobacco as a safer substitute for cigarettes or as a quitting aid would be premature and dangerous.”
Other Public Health Authorities’ Views On Smokeless Tobacco?

U.S. National Cancer Institute - “The bioassay data strongly support the epidemiological observation that ST is carcinogenic to humans. Twenty-eight carcinogens have been identified in chewing tobacco and snuff. The high concentrations of N-nitrosamines in ST, and especially the high levels of TSNA, are of great concern.” [Source - National Cancer Institute, Smoking and Tobacco Control Monograph 2: Smokeless Tobacco or Health: An International Perspective, September 1992]
Other Public Health Authorities’ Views On Smokeless Tobacco?

U.S. National Toxicology Program - “The oral use of smokeless tobacco is known to be a human carcinogen based on sufficient evidence of carcinogenicity from studies in humans which indicate a causal relationship between exposure to smokeless tobacco and human cancer.” [Source - National Toxicology Program, 10th Report on Carcinogens: Revised December 2002]
Other Public Health Authorities’ Views On Smokeless Tobacco?

World Health Organization - “There is conclusive evidence that certain smokeless tobacco products increase risk of oral cancer, specifically ... smokeless tobacco in the United States.” [Source - World Health Organization Scientific Advisory Committee on Tobacco Product Regulation, Scientific Advisory Committee on Tobacco Product Regulation Recommendation on Smokeless Tobacco Products, 2003]
Is there such a thing as a harm reducing tobacco product?

“There is no evidence currently that use of any product, other than those that lead to cessation, can achieve harm reduction from tobacco.”

National Academy of Science’s Institute of Medicine 2001 Report, “Clearing the Smoke”
Where do we go from here?

• Address the public health controversy
• Conduct “valid” comparative research
• Advocate for FDA regulation of tobacco products
• Continue to monitor tobacco industry tactics