



## Why Quit Chewing Tobacco?

Chewing tobacco is often marketed as being safer than smoking cigarettes, but did you know that chewing tobacco has many health risks, some of which are different from those associated with smoking cigarettes?

**Here are some of the consequences of chewing tobacco:**



**1. Chewing tobacco has 28 cancer-causing chemicals.**

It is typically placed between the cheeks and the gums. Over time this develops oral cancer and forms red irritating patches on the cheeks, gums, and lips.



**2. Gum disease is another known health risk many individuals that chew tobacco experience.**

Gum disease is an infection found between the cheeks and gums that deforms the bone structure causing poor support of your teeth. As a result, your teeth may eventually fall out or need to be removed by a medical professional.



**3. Chewing tobacco has 88 milligrams (mg) of nicotine per tin.**

For comparison, cigarettes have 36 mg of nicotine per pack. Nicotine is what keeps people addicted to these products, and chewing tobacco has no shortage of this highly addictive chemical.



# Quitting is hard, but your health provider can help.

## Tips for Quitting Chewing Tobacco:

- **Select a quit date:** try to pick a quit date within the next two weeks to prepare for withdrawal.
- **Understand nicotine withdrawal:** after quitting your body may feel uneasy and will want to chew tobacco. This is your body's response to not having nicotine in your system. Some common withdrawal symptoms include increased tiredness, mood swings (feeling frustrated, anxious, or upset), and not being able to think clearly.
- **Learn how to handle triggers and cravings:** a trigger is any person, place, or event that may initiate a tobacco craving. Become aware of these personal triggers so you can minimize potential cravings.
- **Use Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRT):** this is a recommended method to reduce withdrawal symptoms while satisfying your nicotine craving. Speak to your medical provider today if you are interested in using NRT, much of which is available for purchase over-the-counter. We recommend combination NRT; for example, using the patch all day and the gum periodically when cravings strike.
- **Get support:** this may be your close friends or family, your medical provider, or an online resource. Having strong support will help you quit chewing tobacco for good.

## Where to Begin your Quit Journey:

- Ask your medical provider or substance use counselor for help on how to quit chewing tobacco
- Call 1-800-Quit-Now for counseling services and recommendations
- Visit [www.smokefree.gov](http://www.smokefree.gov) for step-by-step guidance
- Explore the large number of free resources at [www.TakingTexasTobaccoFree.com](http://www.TakingTexasTobaccoFree.com)