

ADA Healthy Smile Tips

- Brush your teeth twice a day with a fluoride toothpaste.
- Clean between your teeth once a day.
- Eat a healthy diet and limit snacks.
- Visit your dentist regularly.

For more information about taking care of your mouth and teeth, visit MouthHealthy.org, the ADA's website just for patients.



Tobacco and Oral Health



You are probably aware that smoking causes cancer, stroke and heart disease, but did you know that it can also cause serious harm to your mouth?

It doesn't matter how you use it — whether you smoke it, dip it, or chew it — tobacco is not good for you.

Using tobacco in any form is risky. Here's why:

Cigarettes, pipes and cigars

Smoking traditional tobacco like cigarettes, pipes and cigars can cause serious health issues to your mouth and throat. Cigarette smoke has over 7,000 chemicals and chemical compounds. At least 70 of them are known to cause cancer.

Smoking is also linked to:

- Gum disease
- Heart disease
- Stroke
- Lung disease
- Problems with pregnancy
- Birth defects
- Mouth cancer
- Throat cancer



Smoking causes stains that can only be removed by a licensed dental professional.

Nicotine stain photo courtesy of Othman Shibly, DDS, MS, School of Dental Medicine, University at Buffalo, State University of New York

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Waterpipes (Hookahs)

Waterpipes, or hookahs, also pack a tobacco punch. A smoking session could last as long as 80 minutes. Smoking hookahs have even been linked to many of the same health problems as cigarettes.

There are many types of hookah tobacco available, so you can't know how much nicotine and other dangerous chemicals are in it every time you smoke.

Did You Know?

One session of smoking from a hookah can be the same as smoking **100 cigarettes!**



Smokeless tobacco

Smokeless tobacco (also called chewing tobacco, spit, dip, snuff, snus or chew) contains more than 3,000 chemicals, including at least 28 cancer-causing ingredients. You may think that "smokeless" means "harmless," but this is not true. **Any kind of tobacco can harm your health.**

If you use smokeless tobacco then you can take in a large amount of nicotine and cancer-causing chemicals even without lighting up.



One can of smokeless tobacco has as much nicotine as 60 cigarettes (or three packs).

The nicotine in smokeless tobacco is swallowed or absorbed through blood vessels in your mouth. Holding an average-sized dip in your mouth for 30 minutes gives you as much nicotine as smoking three cigarettes.

E-cigarettes and vaping machines

Many people are turning to e-cigarettes and vaping machines because they believe they may be a safer and healthier choice than traditional tobacco products like cigarettes, pipes, and cigars. However, **there is no current evidence to show that e-cigarettes and vaping devices are any safer than regular tobacco products. There is also no evidence to show that vaping is an effective way to quit smoking.**

Plus, the same toxic ingredients that are in cigarettes have also been found in the vapor of e-cigarettes. There are thousands of brands and types of vaping liquids on the market. They all have different ingredients and different amounts of nicotine in them, so there isn't a clear way to know exactly what other chemicals and how much nicotine you are inhaling every time you vape.

If you are addicted to nicotine, it will be difficult to stop using smokeless tobacco or e-cigarettes.

What happens to your mouth when you use tobacco?

Overall, tobacco can affect all parts of your health, including your mouth. It can lead to gum disease and tooth loss. Your teeth and tongue can become brown and stained. You can also have bad breath that doesn't go away and even get mouth sores. Using tobacco also slows down recovery time after dental treatments.



Sores, gums that pull away from teeth and stains often result from using smokeless tobacco.



Tobacco users are at higher risk of gum disease, which can lead to tooth loss.

Why Quit Using Tobacco?

- **Your mouth will be healthier.** Quitting tobacco can lower your risk for gums that pull away from your teeth, gum disease, bone loss of the jaw and tooth loss.
- **You will look and feel better.** Bad breath, stained teeth that cannot be cleaned by brushing, and drooling saliva are all results of using tobacco.
- **You will save money.** The amount you spend each week on tobacco can add up to hundreds, even thousands, of dollars a year.
- **You will set a healthy example.** Be a role model for your family and friends, especially children. You may even inspire others to give up tobacco when you quit.

Tips to Quit Tobacco

- **Make a list** of your own personal reasons for quitting.
- **Set a date to quit** in the near future and stick to it. Choose a "low stress" time to quit.
- **Don't do it alone** — ask your dentist, physician, family, friends and coworkers for their support in helping you quit.
- **Ask your dentist or physician about products** that may help your body gradually get used to life without nicotine.
- **Find a healthy substitute** when you have a tobacco craving, such as sugarless gum, sugar-free hard candy, sunflower seeds or carrot sticks.
- **Think about the 4 D's** when you crave tobacco:
 - **Delay** — the craving will pass in 5-10 minutes.
 - **Drink water** — it gives you something to hold in your hands and put in your mouth.
 - **Do something else** — distract yourself by being active.
 - **Deep breathing** — deeply breathing in and out will help relax you.

Resources to Quit Tobacco

- **www.smokefree.gov**
This website provides a Step-By-Step Quit Guide and other tools to help you quit.
- **National Network of Tobacco Cessation Quitlines**
1-800-QUITNOW (1-800-784-8669)
1-800-332-8615 (TTY)
Callers can speak with a counselor in your state, as well as receive information and referrals to other helpful sources.