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Sent: Wednesday, July 21, 2010 9:35 AM
To: jparnell@oralhealthkansas.org
Subject: Oral Health Kansas Weekly Wednesday Update



Volume 1, Issue 28

July 21, 2010

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KAMU Taking Calls for Free Dental Care

New federal funding is available for dental services through the Kansas Association for the Medically Underserved.

For more information [click here](#).

Smokeless tobacco users increase their risk for oral cancer

The statewide smoking ban went into effect on July 1. This means smoking in public places in Kansas will be all but nonexistent. It also means there is a possibility more people will turn to smokeless tobacco. The dangers of using smokeless tobacco are many and serious.

Effects of smokeless tobacco use include:

- Addiction to nicotine
- Oral leukoplakia (white mouth lesions that can become cancerous)
- Gum disease
- Gum recession (when the gum pulls away from the teeth)
- Possible increased risks for heart disease, diabetes, and reproductive problems are being studied.

There are two types of smokeless tobacco: snuff and chewing tobacco.

Snuff, a finely ground or shredded tobacco, is packaged as dry, moist, or in small tea bag-like pouches. Typically, the user places a pinch or dip between the cheek and gum.

Chewing tobacco is available in loose leaf, or twist forms, with the user putting a wad of tobacco inside the cheek. Smokeless tobacco is sometimes called "spit" or "spitting" tobacco because people spit out the tobacco juices and saliva that build up in the mouth.

- Chewing tobacco and snuff contain 28 carcinogens (cancer-causing agents).



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- All tobacco, including smokeless tobacco, contains nicotine, which is addictive.
- The amount of nicotine absorbed from smokeless tobacco is 3 to 4 times the amount delivered by a cigarette.
- Nicotine is absorbed 3 to 4 times more per dose from smokeless tobacco than from cigarettes.
- The nicotine stays in the bloodstream for a longer time with smokeless tobacco products.

In the United States, the 2000 National Household Survey on Drug Abuse, which was conducted by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, reported the following statistics:

- An estimated 7.6 million Americans age 12 and older (3.4 percent) had used smokeless tobacco in the past month.
- Smokeless tobacco use was most common among young adults ages 18 to 25.
- Men were 10 times more likely than women to report using smokeless tobacco (6.5 percent of men age 12 and older compared with 0.5 percent of women).

The Surgeon General concluded that the use of smokeless tobacco "is not a safe substitute for smoking cigarettes. It can cause cancer and a number of noncancerous conditions and can lead to nicotine addiction and dependence." Since 1991, the National Cancer Institute (NCI), a part of the National Institutes of Health, has officially recommended that the public avoid and discontinue the use of all tobacco products, including smokeless tobacco.

Also remember that your dentist or doctor can be a good source of information about the health risks of smokeless tobacco and about quitting. Friends, family members, teachers, and coaches can help a person quit smokeless tobacco use by giving them support and encouragement.

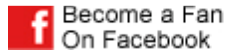
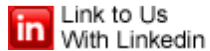
The toll-free Kansas Tobacco Quitline, **1-800-QUIT NOW** (1-800-784-8669), is a useful and effective tool for tobacco users who are ready to quit. The Quitline is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Experienced cessation counselors work with callers to prepare for a quit date and help create a free personalized quit plan. The one-on-one telephone counseling sessions are scheduled at times convenient for the caller. Callers are encouraged to contact the Quitline as many times as possible to help them meet their goals.



Innovative Ideas Expo

The 2010 Oral Health Kansas Conference will feature an Innovative Ideas Expo. This new element to the conference will offer participants the chance to learn about some of the exciting projects in oral health across the state through interactive poster displays. If you have a project you would like to share with your colleagues across the state, please click here to learn more and submit your idea for inclusion in the [Innovative Ideas expo](#).

If you have an idea, story or suggestion for a Oral Health Kansas Weekly Wednesday Update please send an email to jparnell@oralhealthkansas.org



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