



Out-of-Area Health Benefits

by Judy Muschamp, Health Director

The next call-in date for out-of-area health benefits is April 3, 2006, beginning at 8 a.m.

The number to call is 1-800-628-5720 or you can try the local number, 541-444-1236. Staff will not begin answering the telephone until 8 a.m. and voice-mail messages will not reserve funding.

This is the final quarter for the 2004 excess pledge revenue funds, so I don't know how much, if any, funding will be available.

On the last call-in day, Jan. 3, there was an available balance of \$26,400 for re-distribution. Obligations were made for nine vision, 17 dental, and two medical.

It took just 20 minutes to deplete the funds. Unfortunately, there were

161 missed calls and the majority of these calls came in before 8 a.m.

The Health Committee solicited input from the membership for recommendations on amending the process for fairly distributing these out-of-area health benefits and we will discuss the handful of comments received.

In March the committee's recommendations will be forwarded to Tribal Council for consideration when funding the new allocation of benefits.

Also, a reminder to all Siletz Tribal members who reside outside the 11-county service area: Effective Jan. 1, 2006, your Pequot pharmacy card benefit in the amount of \$500 is available.

If you need a new or replacement card, please contact Danise Barker in the Contract Health Service office at the phone numbers listed above.

Teens in a Pinch

Dangers of Snuff, Chew, and Smokeless Tobacco

You don't smoke it. You don't swallow it. All you do is slosh it around your mouth and spit out the brown juices every few seconds.

OK, so it actually is pretty disgusting. But so what? After all, it's called **smokeless** or **chewing** tobacco. That means you chew and spit it, not smoke it, so it can't be as bad as inhaling tobacco smoke into your lungs, right?

Wrong ... unfortunately, **smokeless** doesn't mean **harmless**. The fact is, chewing tobacco is every bit as dangerous as smoking it.

What is Smokeless Tobacco?

Smokeless tobacco, also called spit tobacco, chewing tobacco, chew, chaw, dip, plug, and probably a few other things, comes in two forms: snuff and chewing tobacco.

Snuff is a fine-grain tobacco that often comes in teabag-like pouches that users "pinch" or "dip" between their lower lip and gum. Chewing tobacco comes in shredded, twisted, or "bricked" tobacco leaves that users put between their cheek and gum.

Whether it's snuff or chewing tobacco, you're supposed to let it sit in your mouth and suck on the tobacco juices, spitting often to get rid of the saliva that builds up. This sucking and chewing allows nicotine, which is a drug to which you can become addicted, to be absorbed into the bloodstream through the tissues in your mouth. You don't even need to swallow.

Who Chews?

As many as 20 percent of high school boys and 2 percent of high school girls use smokeless tobacco, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Of the 12 million to 14 million American users, one-third are under age 21 and more than half of those developed the habit before they were 13.

Peer pressure is just one of the reasons for starting the habit. Serious users often graduate from brands that deliver less nicotine to stronger ones. With each use, you need a little more of the drug to get the same feeling.

What Can Chewing Tobacco Do to Me?

Just like smoking cigarettes, chewing smokeless tobacco can eventually rip your body apart and kill you.

It's that simple, really. There's no such thing as a "safe" tobacco.

The more immediate effects can disrupt your social life: bad breath and yellowish-brown stains on your teeth. You'll also get mouth sores (about 70 percent of spit tobacco users have them).

But it gets a lot more serious than that. Consequences of chewing and spitting tobacco include:

- Cracking and bleeding lips and gums
- Receding gums, which eventually can make your teeth fall out
- Increased heart rate, high blood pressure, and irregular heartbeats, all leading to a greater risk of heart attacks and brain damage (from a stroke)
- Cancer

Oral cancer means cancer of the mouth and can happen in the lips, tongue, floor of the mouth, roof of the mouth, cheeks, or gums.

It's been medically proved that longtime use of chewing tobacco can lead to cancer. But cancer from chewing tobacco doesn't occur just in the mouth. Some of the cancer-causing agents in the tobacco can get into the lining of your stomach, your esophagus, and your bladder.

Quitting the Dipping

If you're a dipper, put some long thought into breaking the habit and quitting now. When you decide to quit, don't do it alone. Tell friends or family and enlist their support. Strategies for breaking the habit include:

- Using a nicotine gum or a patch (ask your doctor about these options first)
- Planning ahead and using substitutes, such as tobacco-free mint-leaf snuff, sugarless gum, hard candy, beef jerky, sunflower seeds, shredded coconut, raisins, or dried fruit
- Getting involved in healthier activities: lifting weights, shooting baskets, going for a swim, etc.

It's tough to quit, but realize that backsliding is common, so don't give up. Your chances of success increase with each try!

Reprinted from: kidshealth.org/teen/drug_alcohol/tobacco/smokeless.html

2006 Annual "Luau" Papathon

Take Time Out for Your Women's Health Exam

March 21, 2006

Appointments available from noon to 8 p.m.

Food and refreshments available
Great gifts and prizes
Child care available if requested



Please call 541-444-1030 or 1-800-648-0449 to schedule your appointment today!

If child care is needed, please call Kari to schedule at 541-444-9677 or 1-800-648-0449, ext. 1677



Siletz Community Health Clinic, 107 SE Swan Ave., Siletz, Ore.

OCCC Accepting Applications for First Nursing Program Class

The Nursing Program at Oregon Coast Community College is now accepting applications for the first class of 20 nursing students, which will begin studies in September 2006.

Program admission requirements include a high school diploma or GED, algebra, chemistry, anatomy and physiology, medical terminology, and a course entitled Nursing Success Strategies. The latter is a course designed to help students determine whether nursing is the occupation they want to pursue as well as introduce them to the rigors of the program.

Information and applications for the nursing program are available on the college Web site – www.occc.

cc.or.us. **Completed application materials are due March 31, 2006.**

The two-year nursing program is offered on a full-time basis. Students will be able to sit for the licensed practical nurse examination at the end of the first year and/or continue on and sit for the national registered nurse examination at the end of year two.

OCCC has been working on the development of the nursing program for several years. Most recently the program received initial approval from the Oregon State Board of Nursing and the Oregon Board of Education.

In January, Dr. Dona J. Lethbridge, an experienced nursing educator, was hired to direct the program.

Nuts for Nutrition

Nuts can liven up a salad, add crunch to pasta, and add texture to stir-fry. Enjoying a handful of nuts can be healthful, too.

Nuts may help reduce your risk of heart disease, diabetes, and some forms of cancer. In addition, they provide protein, folic acid, niacin, magnesium, selenium, zinc, and other important vitamins and minerals. Nuts also contain more unsaturated fats than animal proteins.

For a good "healthy" fat composition, try walnuts, almonds, peanuts, and pecans.

The amount of fat in nuts is high, so watch your portions. One ounce of nuts, which is 18 pecan halves or eight walnuts, contains between 160 and 200 calories.

Produced by the American Dietetic Association's Public Relations Team and available at www.eatright.org.