



Siletz Community

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**“What is PRC?
I thought I called
Contract Health.”**



NEW!

Contract Health Services (CHS)

is renamed

Purchased Referred Care (PRC)

1-800-628-5720 for Questions

Events

December 6th & 20th
Native STAND
Siletz Clinic - Behavioral Health
5:00 - 7:00pm

December 12th
“Letting Go” Ceremony
Dance House
5:00 - 7:00 pm

December 13th
Diabetes Luncheon
Tribal Community Center
12:00 - 1:00 pm

December 24th & 25th
Tribal Holiday
Tribal Offices Closed

Is smokeless tobacco a safe alternative vs. smoking?

Smoking is a serious health risk and one that can have countless negative impacts on our health. Of course everyone would stop if they could, but the unfortunate reality is that smoking is also addictive and sometimes this can make it seem impossible to kick the habit. One solution many people turn to is to try something different. It isn't the smoking itself that is addictive you see, rather it is the nicotine which causes a release of dopamine in the brain and encourages neurotransmission resulting in a 'high' that we begin to crave. One strategy that some people will use themselves is chewing tobacco – which contains nicotine but doesn't involve inhaling anything into your lungs.

Types of Chewing Tobacco—Chewing tobacco goes by many names: smokeless tobacco, chew, snuff, snus, pinch, dip and more.

Is Chewing Tobacco a Safe Alternative?

The addiction to cigarettes you see goes deeper than just the physical addiction to tobacco – it's also a psychological addiction. It becomes a habit and it becomes a crutch that many use to lean on emotionally. If you are used to going outside for a ten minute break and lighting the end of a match then you will be used to the warmth this creates, to the feel of the cigarette in your mouth – generally to the entire rigmarole and culture and not just the chemical kick. As a result chewing tobacco just can't cut it. And unfortunately there are more serious problems revolving around the fact that chewing tobacco is actually still very bad for you. You can change to chewing tobacco and think that you're curing yourself of smoking, but in fact you are just replacing one dangerous and damaging habit for another.

Addiction

The big problem with chewing tobacco is that it actually results in your taking in more tobacco than a cigarette. This occurs because you leave the chew in your mouth for a longer time, this causes you to get a steady stream of nicotine throughout the day. In other words your body becomes accustomed to getting more nicotine and getting a constant flow of it.

Cancer

There are over thirty different cancer-causing agents in chewing tobacco. You will be less likely to experience lung cancer because these won't make it to your lungs, but the chances of getting it in your mouth, throat, cheek, gums, lips, jaw or chin are increased as the substance will spend much longer here. This can be fatal, or if you have to have it removed it can result in serious disfigurement in the mouth area. Pancreatic cancer and kidney cancer are also more likely. To drive home just how dangerous chewing tobacco is, look inside your mouth. If you already chew tobacco then you might see that there are some tiny white lesions there. These tiny white lesions are called leukoplakia and are 'precancerous' and if you continue these lesions can grow and become cancerous.

Heart Problems

Chewing tobacco speeds up your heart rate and increases your blood pressure. This then increases your chances of heart problems and circulatory diseases. You are more likely to experience poor circulation leading to nerve damage, cold extremities, lethargy and more, and you are more likely to suffer a heart attack or stroke.

Neither chewing tobacco nor smoking are advised and both can lead to serious problems. They are both addictive, unattractive, unsociable and frankly expensive. More importantly both can lead to various forms of cancer and heart disease. While you won't get tar in your lungs or blood stream with chewing tobacco, higher amounts of nicotine and the long amount of time the substance spends in your mouth means that addiction and mouth cancer is actually even more likely.

