

INFORMATION ABOUT NEW TOBACCO PRODUCTS



WHAT IT IS: Snus (pronounced “snoose”) is a relatively new tobacco product in the U.S. The small pouches contain moist tobacco leaves. Unlike chew tobacco, the product doesn’t require the user to spit out tobacco juice. Snus pouches come in different flavors. A pouch is intended to be placed underneath the upper lip and is discarded when used up. Snus is packaged very much like gum or mints. The product is cheaper than cigarettes.

CONTENTS: Contains pasteurized tobacco, water, pouch materials, flavors (including menthol), sodium carbonate, and sodium chloride.

IS IT SAFE? Carcinogen levels in snus may be lower than they are in cigarettes but they are not low. “Nitrosamine levels in snus are still 100 times greater than levels of nitrosamines in foods like nitrite-preserved meats. This is not a harmless product.” (Stephen S. Hecht, PhD, professor of cancer prevention at the University of Minnesota)

The FDA has required all snus manufacturers who sell the product in the U.S. to submit ingredient lists to the agency so that it can make a final determination on appropriate warnings and any other regulation required for the product.



WHAT THEY ARE: Dissolvable tobacco is a smokeless, spit-free product made from finely milled tobacco and held together by food-grade binders. It’s designed to be placed in the mouth, on the tongue, or between the cheek and gum where it dissolves to release nicotine.

CONTENTS: Contain finely grained tobacco mixed with “additives such as water, flavorants, binders, colorants, pH adjusters, buffering agents, fillers, disintegration aids, humectants, antioxidants, oral care ingredients, preservatives, additives derived from herbal or botanical sources, and mixtures thereof.” [From patent application] The nicotine amount in the products is said to be high: A cigarette smoker typically takes in about 1 milligram of nicotine. Camel dissolvables are said to deliver about 0.6 to 3.1 mg of nicotine each.

ARE THEY SAFE? FDA’s Center for Tobacco Products (CTP) has requested information from the manufacturers so that it can make a determination. The CTP is concerned that dissolvable products might be particularly appealing to children because of the brightly colored packaging, candy-like appearance and easily concealed size of the products. They are concerned that the products’ high nicotine content and quick dissolving may encourage nicotine dependence and addiction in adolescents. The CTP is also concerned that these products could cause toxic poisoning in children who might mistake them for candy.



WHAT THEY ARE: E-cigarettes are battery operated devices that contain cartridges filled with nicotine, flavorings and other chemicals. The smoker places the cartridge end in the mouth and puffs on it like a real cigarette. A heating element produces a fine mist that contains nicotine, which is inhaled. At the same time the smoker inhales, an LED light turns red at the other end, simulating a glowing cigarette. The e-cigarette industry calls this “vaping” as opposed to smoking.

CONTENTS: FDA did a study on some samples in 2009 and discovered these issues: Diethylene glycol, a toxic ingredient used in antifreeze, was detected in one e-cigarette cartridge. Some tobacco-specific nitrosamines, a human cancer causing agent, were detected in half the samples. Cartridges that were labeled as having no nicotine did, in fact, contain nicotine.

E-cigarettes can be easily obtained online and in some tobacco stores. In Idaho, it's unlawful to sell or distribute electronic cigarettes from a vending machine or from self-service displays. It's also unlawful to sell these products to minors.

ARE THEY SAFE? FDA has not fully evaluated e-cigarettes for safety or effectiveness. When FDA conducted limited studies of certain samples, they found significant quality issues, including the results mentioned under Contents. The bottom line: consumers can't be certain what chemicals are in the cartridges nor how much nicotine they're taking in.

Because of the nicotine content, e-cigarettes should not be used by women who are pregnant.

References

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- Dissolvable Tobacco Products: A New Threat. www.purdue.edu/swo/healthshop/atod/tobacco/DissolvableTobaccoProducts.pdf

For more information about electronic cigarettes:
<http://www.fda.gov/NewsEvents/PublicHealthFocus/ucm172906.htm>



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