

Facts about Tobacco

What Effects Can Smoking Have On My Oral Health?

Use of any tobacco can increase your risk for developing oral cancer and gum disease (Periodontal disease). Tobacco products damage your gum tissue by affecting the attachment of bone and soft tissue to your teeth. An example of the effect is receding gums. Receding gums and bone exposes the tooth roots and increases your risk of developing sensitivity to hot and colds, or tooth decay in these unprotected areas. Receding gums and bone may also loosen teeth and need periodontal surgery/ treatment or if significant possibly extraction. Smoking also can contribute to bad breath, stains on your teeth and tongue, and building up of tartar on you teeth.

Smoking can delay healing after a tooth extraction or other types of oral surgery, and/or can contribute to exposing bone after an extraction known as a “dry socket”. Dry Sockets are very painful and only time will heal the wound. It is best to prevent a dry socket from occurring by simply not smoking for several days after a tooth has been extracted and allow surgery site to heal. (Nicotene Patches may help you over come your desire to smoke during your healing period).

Are Cigars A Safe Alternative To Cigarettes?

No - Cigars are not a safe alternative to cigarettes. Even if you do not inhale cigar smoke, you are still at risk for oral and pharyngeal (throat) cancers. Like cigarette smokers, cigar smokers are at increased risk for periodontal (gum) disease, which is the leading cause of tooth loss. In addition, to the health risks, cigar smoke (and cigarette smoke) can cause staining of the teeth and tongue as well as bad breath.

Are Smokeless Tobacco Safe?

No - Like cigars and cigarettes, smokeless products contain a variety of toxins associated with cancer. At least 28 cancer causing chemicals have been identified in smokeless tobacco products. Smokeless tobacco can irritate your gum tissue, causing it to recede or pull away from your teeth. Once this gum tissue recedes, the roots of your teeth are exposed, increasing your risk for tooth decay. The roots of your teeth also may become sensitive to hot and cold or other irritants, which means you could experience some discomfort when eating or drinking. Sugars often added to enhance the flavor of smokeless tobacco, can increase your risk for tooth decay. Smokeless tobacco also typically contains sand and grit, which can wear down your teeth and destroy your teeth, bite and smile.

***The best advice is to simply DO NOT use any type of tobacco products at all!!**