

# TOBACCO

Tobacco is a valuable crop in the U.S. Farmers grow this green plant, then dry out the leaves and grind them into the familiar dry, brown stuff that people smoke, sniff or chew.



## IDENTIFICATION

**Different Forms of Tobacco:** Cigarettes, Cigars, Chewing Tobacco, Snuff and Snus.

**What's it Look Like?** Tobacco starts out as a green leafy plant but after being processed and dried, it is brown.

**How's it Used?** Smoked, chewed or sniffed. It can also be smoked using a pipe or a hookah.

**What's it Do?** Tobacco contains a drug called nicotine. When you use tobacco, the nicotine immediately courses through your body and into your brain. The nicotine causes your brain to release dopamine, which is a chemical that your brain usually releases when you do something fun. Nicotine is highly addictive.

### Warning Signs of Tobacco Use:

- Smoke smell in clothing or hair
- Friends smoke
- Started using mouthwash, breath mints or gum
- Burnt holes in clothing



### Facts about Tobacco

- Cigarettes contain over 7,000 chemicals.
- Dip and chew contains DDT, a poison used to kill insects.
- Just one cigar can contain as much nicotine as an entire pack of cigarettes.
- It is illegal for anyone under a certain age to buy, use or possess tobacco items of any kind. Tobacco laws vary by state.



## SHORT-TERM EFFECTS

- Foul-smelling breath, hair and clothes
- Trouble catching your breath
- Weakened immune system
- Wrinkly, dry skin
- Yellow, stained teeth



## LONG-TERM EFFECTS

- Emphysema
- Lung cancer
- Increased risk of other cancers, such as in the lips, mouth, throat and bladder
- Increased risk of heart disease and stroke
- Stained teeth and tooth loss
- Gum disease
- Death



### Refusal Tips for Kids

It's not always easy for a kid to keep their cool in the face of peer pressure. Give them a few suggestions on how to say "NO" like:

- "No thanks. My parents would kill me if they found out."
- "Gross! I don't want bad breath and smelly hair."
- "Don't you know tobacco gives you cancer?"
- "No way. That stuff is really bad for your lungs."

No matter how tobacco is used- smoked, chewed or sniffed- it's still a dangerous, addictive drug.



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JUST THE FACTS