

# Is snuff the answer to quitting smoking?

September 18 2006

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Researchers in Washington say smokeless tobacco is much safer than cigarettes but the jury is out on whether smokers should be encouraged to switch habits.

Scientists at the National Cancer Institute and researchers in Britain have found a dramatically reduced health risk from smokeless tobacco that is low in nitrosamines, the Wall Street Journal reports.

In the United States, the majority of smokeless tobacco sales come from so-called moist snuff that varies widely in the amount of nitrosamines.

Unfortunately, the brands containing the lowest levels are among the hardest to find.

Makers of smokeless tobacco are careful not to advertise that it may help with quitting cigarettes since such a claim would prompt regulation by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration.

The public health community in the United States has been campaigning against smokeless tobacco since the 1980s, citing the risk of oral cancer, addiction and development of cardiovascular disease.

"Using smokeless tobacco is dumb," says Dr. Lynn T. Kozlowski of State University of New York at Buffalo. "Using cigarettes is dumber."

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Citation: Is snuff the answer to quitting smoking? (2006, September 18) retrieved 25 April 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2006-09-snuff.html>

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