

# Leading health groups urge Major League Baseball to prohibit tobacco use at ballparks and on camera

June 27 2014, by Retha Sherrod

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Nine major medical and public health organizations have written to Major League Baseball and the Major League Baseball Players Association urging them to agree to a complete prohibition on tobacco use at ballparks and on camera.

The groups sending the letter are: American Cancer Society, American Dental Association, American Heart Association, American Lung Association, American Medical Association, Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids, Legacy, Oral Health America and Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. [View the full text of the letter.](#)

The letter was sent following the death of Hall of Famer Tony Gwynn from cancer that he attributed to his longtime use of chewing tobacco. Tony Gwynn's death has generated significant media coverage about the use of chewing tobacco in baseball.

"Major League Baseball and the Players Association can honor Tony Gwynn's memory by agreeing to a complete prohibition on tobacco use at ballparks and on camera. Our organizations urge you to do so without delay," the letter states.

"Use of smokeless tobacco endangers the health of Major League ballplayers. It also sets a terrible example for the millions of young people who watch baseball at the ballpark or on TV and often see players

and managers using tobacco."

In 2011, Major League Baseball and the Players Association agreed to some restrictions on smokeless tobacco use, including prohibitions on carrying tobacco tins in uniforms and on using tobacco during televised interviews. But "these are not sufficient to eliminate [smokeless tobacco](#) use in public settings or to prevent more players from becoming addicted to these deadly products," the letter states.

The letter was sent to Major League Baseball Commissioner Bud Selig and Players Association Executive Director Tony Clark.

Provided by American Heart Association

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