

Numerous recent news reports cite that use of smokeless tobacco products, including “snus” provides a safer alternative to smoking and also a means of tobacco cessation. The following statements from credible health professionals refute these contentions:



“In the absence of documented scientifically sound, randomized and controlled clinical trials demonstrating safety and effectiveness, it is unwarranted to advocate the use of smokeless tobacco as a smoking cessation technique.” **“Finally, based on current scientific evidence, the Council believes that promotion of smokeless tobacco use for any reason sends an improper public health message.”** *Source: ADA Council on Access, Prevention and Interprofessional Relations (CAPIR) position paper.*

“I suppose **you could argue that shooting yourself in the leg poses less of a health risk than shooting yourself in the head.** But do we really need to have that discussion?” *Source: Former ADA president, Dr. Greg Chadwick, on harm reduction and smokeless tobacco as a safe alternative to smoking cigarettes.*

Consumers should know if these products truly reduce exposure to carcinogens, and experience tells us this information will not be either forthcoming from the companies that manufacture them, or that we need independent verification of claims,” said Peter Shields, MD, professor of Medicine and Oncology at Georgetown University, and director of Cancer Genetics and Epidemiology at the Lombardi Comprehensive Cancer Center. *Source: September 2006 press release from Georgetown University announcing the university’s \$17 million grant from the National Cancer Institute to study the safety of alternative tobacco products. Shields is lead scientist for this grant.*

A University of Minnesota study, “Similar Exposure to a Tobacco-Specific Carcinogen in Smokeless Tobacco Users and Cigarette Smokers,” published in *Cancer Epidemiol Biomarkers Prev* 2007;16(8):1567-72) summarized findings as follows: **“These results show similar exposures to the potent tobacco-specific carcinogen NNK in smokeless tobacco users and smokers. These findings do not support the use of smokes tobacco as a safe substitute for smoking.”**

To learn more about the possible risks and dangers of smokeless tobacco use through the Operation TACTIC program, or to order the program module or CD, phone the Ohio Dental Association at (614) 486-2700 or visit www.oda.org.

“The reduced harm claims of these products have not been substantiated by independent scientific experts, and have not been evaluated or approved by any governmental authorities prior to their marketing.” *Source: National Cancer Institute’s Tobacco Harm Reduction Network.*

Smokeless tobacco is not a safe alternative to cigarettes.”
“Smokeless tobacco does cause cancer.” **“Smokeless tobacco is a known human carcinogen.”** *Source: Former U.S. Surgeon General, Richard H. Carmona, MD, MPH, FACS.*

“That’s not harm reduction, that’s harm creation.” Mitch Zeller, health policy consultant and former director of the office of tobacco programs at the FDA. *Source: New York Times, August 9, 2006.*

“The health community should play no part in helping the [tobacco] industry expand tobacco sales by acknowledging snus as a safer product.” **“We shouldn’t be out there promoting harm ... even reduced harm.”** *Source: USA Today article, “As cigarette sales dip, new products raise concerns”, 08/06/2007, citing Gregory Connolly, director of tobacco control research at Harvard School of Public Health*