

# Tobacco and Your Mouth

## 5 ways smoking harms your dental health



You already know that smoking is bad for your lungs. But did you know that tobacco — whether smoked or chewed — can put your oral health at risk? Here are the top five problems tobacco can cause for your mouth.

**1 Cavities.** Smoking destroys cavity-fighting antibodies in your saliva.<sup>1</sup>

**2 Gum recession.** Whether you smoke or chew it, tobacco irritates the lining of your gums, causing them to permanently pull back from your teeth.<sup>2</sup>

**3 Tooth loss.** Smokers are more than twice as likely to lose teeth as nonsmokers.<sup>3</sup>

**4 Gum disease.** Your risk of gum disease doubles if you're a smoker.<sup>4</sup>

**5 Oral cancer.** Tobacco is the major risk factor for cancers of the mouth and throat.<sup>5</sup>

Thinking of quitting? Turn the page to find out more.

<sup>1</sup> Golpasand Hagh L, Zakavi F, Ansarifard S, Ghasemzadeh O, Solgi G. Association of dental caries and salivary sIgA with tobacco smoking. *Aust Dent J.* 2013;58(2):219-23.

<sup>2</sup> Oral health risks of tobacco use and effects of cessation. *International Dental Journal.* 2010;60(1):7.

<sup>3</sup> Dietrich T, Maserejian NN, Joshipura KJ, Krall EA, Garcia RI. Tobacco use and incidence of tooth loss among US male health professionals. *J Dent Res.* 2007;86(4):373-7.

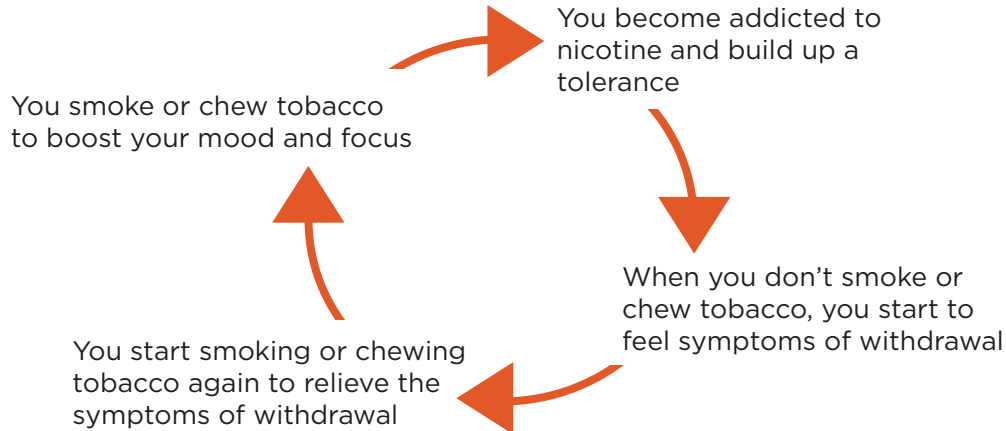
<sup>4</sup> Eke PI, Dye BA, Wei L, Thornton-Evans GO, Genco RJ. Prevalence of periodontitis in adults in the United States: 2009 and 2010. *J Dent Res.* 2012;91(10):914-20.

<sup>5</sup> Warnakulasuriya S, Sutherland G, Scully C. Tobacco, oral cancer, and treatment of dependence. *Oral Oncol.* 2005;41(3):244-60.



## Break the cycle

Understand how nicotine addiction works.



## Kicking the habit

The first step to quitting tobacco is understanding nicotine dependence.

There are four aspects to nicotine addiction:

- physical
- sensory
- psychological
- behavioral

In order to break the habit, you need to address all four aspects of the addiction.

Quitting tobacco can be hard and may take several tries. Enlist the help of your doctor, friends and family. Nicotine replacement therapies, such as gum and patches, may be helpful in reducing physical symptoms of withdrawal.

Did you know your risk of oral cancer, gum disease and tooth loss increases the longer you keep smoking?



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