

## Smokeless Tobacco and Baseball

In 1847, chewing tobacco was the most popular form of tobacco used among baseball players. By 1890, the average American chewed approximately 3 pounds of tobacco per year.

Early ballplayers discovered that saliva production lubricated the mouth in the dusty infield environment. Players moistened their gloves with spit and pitchers even used the juice from a chew to prepare the notorious spitball.

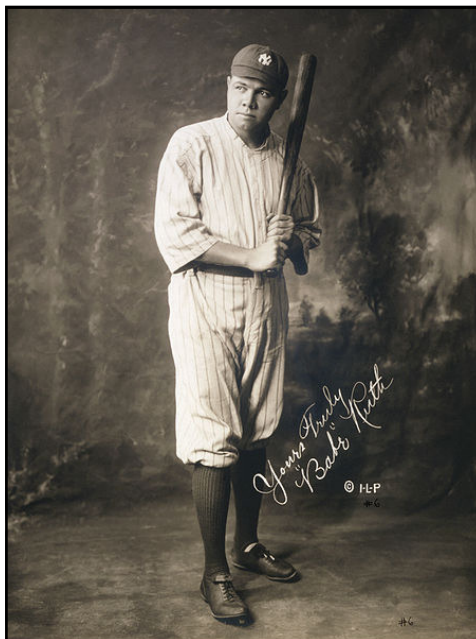
However, this practiced was banned in the 1900's due to the spread of Tuberculosis. Major cities passed ant-spitting laws and removed spittoons from public places. So, players began to smoke cigarettes in place of chewing tobacco.

In the late 1960's, the United States government established warnings on the health dangers of smoking tobacco, resulting in a reemergence in the use of chewing tobacco amongst players. They believed that chewing tobacco was a safer alternative than smoking it. Snuff dipping also entered the scene for the first time.

Unfortunately, many major league players lost their lives or developed oral cancer due to chewing tobacco, such as Babe Ruth, Brett Butler, Curt Flood, and Bill Tuttle. Today, many baseball players know the dangers of smokeless tobacco and choose to chew bubble gum, toothpicks, and even sunflower seeds.



30,000 Americans a year develop throat and oral cancer.



GEORGE "BABE RUTH" HERMAN RUTH, JR.  
ONE OF THE GREATEST SPORTS HEROS  
IN AMERICAN CULTURE!

BORN: FEBRARY 6, 1895  
DIED: AUGUST 16, 1948  
CAUSE OF DEATH: THROAT CANCER

AMERICAN MAJOR LEAGUE BASEBALL PLAYER  
1914— 1935

- BOSTON RED SOX
- NEW YORK YANKESS
- BOSTON BRAVES

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For over 30 years dedicated to building healthy communities...  
one person at a time.

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# Things You Should Know About Smokeless Tobacco



“Smokeless tobacco is not a  
safer alternative to cigarettes.”



# Smokeless Tobacco: Know the facts.



Tobacco use is the single most preventable cause of disease, disability and death in the United States. It is estimated that 443,000 people die each year from using tobacco products and an additional 8.6 million people develop a serious illness as a result of its use. There is also an economic burden from tobacco products, costing more than \$96 billion a year in medical expenditures and another \$97 billion in lost productivity. Despite the health risks and financial burden associated with tobacco use, more than 46 million people use some form of tobacco products.

All forms of tobacco, including cigars and pipes, have deadly consequences, including lung, larynx, esophageal and oral cancer. It was once believed that smokeless tobacco was less harmful and a better alternative than smoking cigarettes, but today we know that this is untrue.

Chewing tobacco, also known as snuff, dip, twist, plug and snus, contains 28 cancer-causing agents (carcinogens). This smokeless form of tobacco is a known cause of human cancer. It increases the risk of developing cancer of the oral cavity, mouth, throat, cheek, lips, tongue and pancreas.



Smokeless tobacco is also strongly associated with Leukoplakia, a precancerous lesion on the soft tissue in your mouth that consists of a white patch which cannot be scraped off. It is also associated with recession of the gums, gum disease and tooth decay.

## Other Health Risks

Not only does smokeless tobacco increase your risk of developing cancer, it is also associated with disorders of the digestive system. Smokeless tobacco is absorbed in your digestive tract through mucous and adds to heartburn, peptic ulcers and increases your risk for Crohn's disease. Tobacco causes the lower esophageal valve to relax, allowing stomach acids to flow up to the esophagus; this can add to the risk of throat and esophageal cancer. It has also been linked to reduced effectiveness of saliva in breaking down foods, which contributes to problems with digestion.

The use of smokeless tobacco by men reduces sperm count and contributes to abnormal sperm cells. In women, it may cause complications during pregnancy, including an increased risk of developing gestational diabetes, premature births, and low birth weight.

## Diabetes and Heart Disease

An average pouch of smokeless tobacco contains considerable amounts of both sugar and sodium. One pouch contains 34% sugar, primarily glucose. Sugar is added to chewing tobacco for flavor and consistency. This becomes a health concern for a person with diabetes because the disease affects your body's ability to use glucose. Individuals with diabetes who use chewing tobacco stand a higher risk of developing complications associated with the disease, such as loss of limbs. It is believed that there is a higher prevalence of diabetes among long-term users of smokeless tobacco than nonusers, since smokeless tobacco users have higher insulin levels than nonusers.

Individuals who chew tobacco also have a higher risk of developing heart disease much like those who smoke cigarettes. Your heart rate and blood pressure is increased by the high sodium content in smokeless tobacco products. All of these factors promote the risk of developing heart disease and stroke.

## What to do:

- If you use smokeless tobacco, it is important to get regular dental check-ups for oral cancer screening.



## Quit to win!

- Pick a quit date. You will have a higher success rate of quitting when you are ready!
- You may use nicotine gum or patch (ask your physician).
- Plan ahead, use substitutes to chew such as sugarless gum, hard candy, sunflower seeds, raisins or dried fruits.
- Don't do it alone—tell your friends and family you are quitting for moral support.
- A free phone based service: 1-866-NJ-Stops/ New Jersey QUITLINE is available for counseling services.

## Good reasons to quit tobacco:

- Your chance of getting sick will go down.
- You will have more energy.
- Those who love you will be happy.

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