



News Alert Northeast Community Challenge Coalition

Smokeless Tobacco Worries Experts



Getting a nicotine fix isn't just about lighting up. The American Lung Association's new annual report, State of Tobacco Control, notes an expanding product: new smokeless alternative to cigarettes.

Snus, a small, teabag-like pouch with tobacco inside that is commonly used in Sweden, is now being marketed in the United States under the Camel and Marlboro brand names. Since last fall, dissolvable tobacco products by Camel-in the form of toothpick-like "sticks," tablet-shaped "orbs," and stamp-sized melting "strips"-have been test-marketed in Columbus, Ohio, Indiana, Indianapolis and Portland, Oregon.

Available in three flavors and packaged in attractive tins, Snus does not have to be spit out and therefore can be used just about anywhere- "at a concert right in front of security guards," "on a jet from Miami to L.A.," or at an "overpriced tapas restaurant," a promotional brochure suggests.

Snus delivers a powerful dose of nicotine: eight milligrams in each pouch, a spokesman for the R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Company, which manufactures Snus. That's far more nicotine per gram than is present in other popular chewing tobacco products, according to some researchers, who are concerned that Snus may turn out to be both carcinogenic and highly addictive.

By providing users a nicotine fix without lighting up, Snus may tempt consumers to ignore initiatives designed to reduce tobacco use, such as indoor smoking bans, experts said. Since Snus can be used discreetly, it may also appeal to teenagers, Mr. Anderson said.

Note: These products can be purchased at local convenient stores.