Accurate Tobacco warnings could be, “if used as directed, cigarettes will kill you.”

Would you be willing to:
… take in methane gas and drink urea / pee?
… have a slice of cow pie after dinner?
… those are some of the chemicals in cigarettes…”

Commercial Tobacco has:
• 4000 chemicals
• 500 poisons
• 43 cancer causing agents

“Habitual” use of tobacco means that the person has smoked more than 100 cigarettes in their entire life and they smoke at least once on most days.
• Natives have the highest habitual tobacco smoking rates of any ethnic or racial group in the U.S.
• The Indian Health Service spends $200 million dollars a year on smoking related illnesses.
• 20% of all Native health care costs have been due to illnesses caused by tobacco products.
• Almost 40% (4 out of every 10) Native Americans smoke habitually.
• Cigarette smoking is highest among Northern Plains (44.1%) and Alaska Natives (39%) and lowest among Southwest Indians (21.2%)
**Habitual Tobacco Use Facts for People of all Races**

- Tobacco use is the leading preventable cause of premature death in the U.S.\(^1\)
- It causes heart disease, stroke, cancer, and problems with pregnancy.
- It also affects the health of our children.
- More than 440,000 Americans die each year of tobacco-related disease (like cancer, heart and lung diseases) \(^1\)
- About 30% of all cancer deaths are directly related to habitual smoking.
- About 87% of all lung cancer deaths are directly related to habitual smoking.
- Tobacco use also increases cervical, uterine, bladder and esophageal cancers.
- Commercial cigarette smoking use is decreasing among all racial groups except for American Indians and Alaska Natives.\(^2\)
- 1 out of every 5 deaths in the US is from a tobacco-related death. Commercial cigarette smoking causes more than 30% of cancer deaths each year. \(^1\)
- Each cigarette is carefully engineered to deliver nicotine, which is addictive.
- Tobacco kills one out of every two people that regularly use it.
- Tobacco kills more than 1,200 people a day in America.
- For some people, the nicotine can cause addiction after the first 5 cigarettes.
- A small majority of people never become addicted, but they keep smoking because they like it.
- Whether addicted or not, habitual tobacco use causes health problems in most people.
- Tobacco results in $75 billion in annual U.S. health care costs.
- Nicotine poisoning has symptoms of nausea, vomiting, headaches, dizziness and in high amounts can cause death within minutes.
- Smoking while pregnant can cause the baby to be born smaller than is healthy. The baby is likely to have more health problems.

**Sources**

Different parts of Indian Country have more deaths from lung cancer, primarily due to *habitual* tobacco smoking.

These charts show that Natives from Alaska and from the Northern Plains have the most lung cancer deaths in Indian Country.

**Secondhand Smoke (Smoke from burning tobacco)**

- An hour spent in a smoke-filled room is equal to smoking one cigarette.
- Secondhand smoke kills 53,000 non-smokers each year.
- Secondhand smoke is poisonous. It contains over 4,000 dangerous chemicals, including:
  - Carbon monoxide (car exhaust)
  - Ammonia (floor / toilet cleaner)
  - Formaldehyde (preserves dead bodies)
  - Benzene (gasoline)
  - Arsenic (rat poison)

- 1 out of 5 of all lung cancers occur in non-smokers who are exposed to secondhand smoke regularly. It also causes cancers other than lung.

- Babies and children are more susceptible to secondhand smoke problems than are adults. Their body cells do not have the “defenses” than adult cells have to fight the poisons.

For babies and children, secondhand smoke increases the likelihood (risk) of:

- Sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS)
- Asthma and other lung problems
- Sinus infections
- Ear problems
- Dental problems
**Alaska Natives and Smokeless (Spit) Tobacco**

- About 41% of Alaska Natives are current cigarette smokers
- About 1 out of 10 Alaska Native women use smokeless (spit) tobacco
- Igmik (sometimes called Blackbull or Dediguss) is a homemade form of smokeless (spit) tobacco
  - Leaf tobacco mixed with ash from burning punk fungus, alder or willow bushes or driftwood
  - Been used for over 150 years
- Not used for ceremonial purposes


**Smokeless (Spit) Tobacco FACTS**

- The prevalence of smokeless tobacco use is higher among Natives than any other racial or ethnic group in the U.S.
- Nicotine from smokeless (spit) tobacco is absorbed in amounts that are 2 to 3 times greater than from cigarettes.
- Igmik is NOT safer than commercial smokeless (spit) tobacco
- Smokeless (spit) tobacco is NOT safer for pregnant women to use
- Smokeless tobacco should not be substituted for cigarette smoking (can cause mouth and lip cancers)

**For further information**

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Sources: US Surgeon General, 2001
http://www.CDC.gov/tobacco/sgr/sgr_2004/Factsheets/2.htm