

# Native American Tobacco Education Fact Sheets: **Tobacco Facts**



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*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..."

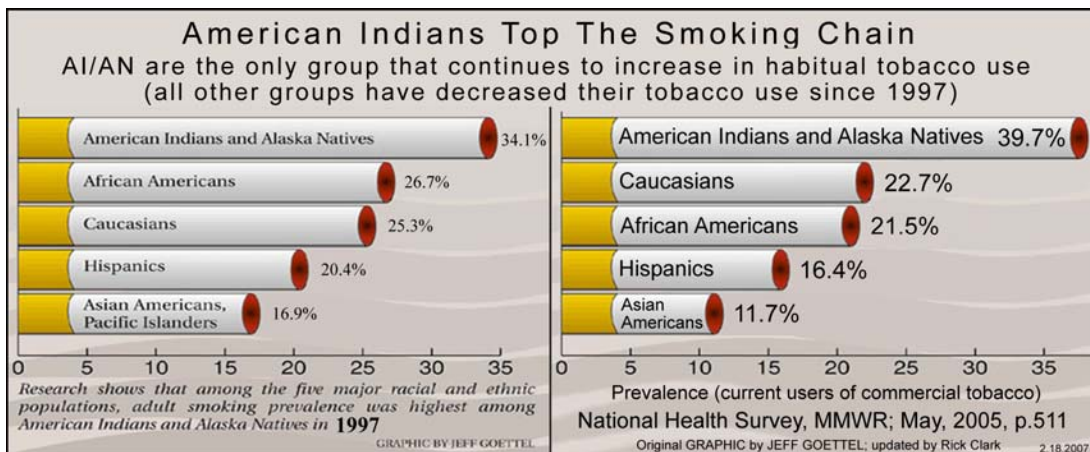
Commercial Tobacco has:

- 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***

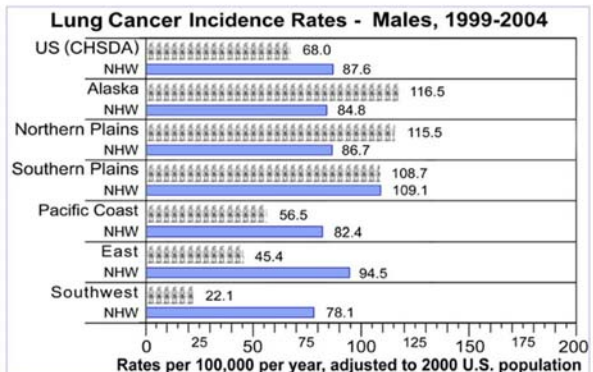
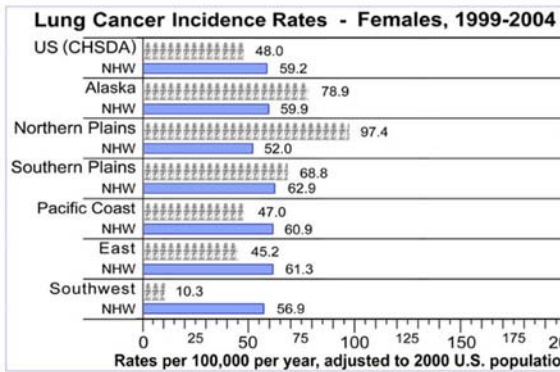
- Tobacco use is the leading preventable cause of premature death in the U.S.<sup>1</sup>
- It causes heart disease, stroke, cancer, and problems with pregnancy.
- It also affects the health of our children.
- More than 440,000 Americans die each year of tobacco-related disease (like cancer, heart and lung diseases) <sup>1</sup>
- 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.<sup>2</sup>
- 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. <sup>1</sup>
- 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

- 1 National Institutes of Health State-of-the-Science conference statement: tobacco use: prevention, cessation, and control. Ann Intern Med. 2006; 145:000-000
- 2 CDC Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report: Cigarette Smoking among Adults: 2003 National Health Interview Survey. May 27, 2005, 54: 20; 511
- 3 CDC Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report: Surveillance for Health Behaviors of AIAN; Findings from BRFSS, 1997-2000. August 1, 2003: 52: SS-7:
- 4 [http://www.CDC.gov/tobacco/sgr/sgr\\_2004/Factsheets/2.htm](http://www.CDC.gov/tobacco/sgr/sgr_2004/Factsheets/2.htm)

- ☞ 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.



Espey, David K; Wo, Xiao-Chen; Swan Judith; Wiggins, Charles; Jim, Melissa A.; Ward, Elizabeth; Howe, Holly L.; Ries, Lynn A.G.; Miller, Barry A.; Jemal, Ahmedin; Ahmed, Faruque; Cobb, Nathaniel; Kaur, Judith S.; and Edwards, Brenda K. Annals to the Nation on the Status of Cancer, 1975-2004, Featuring Cancer in American Indians and Alaska Natives. Cancer [American Cancer Society] 2007 [11-15-07], Volume 110, No. 10. GRAPH MODIFIED BY Rick Clark, Native American Cancer Research

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## Secondhand Smoke (Smoke from burning tobacco)

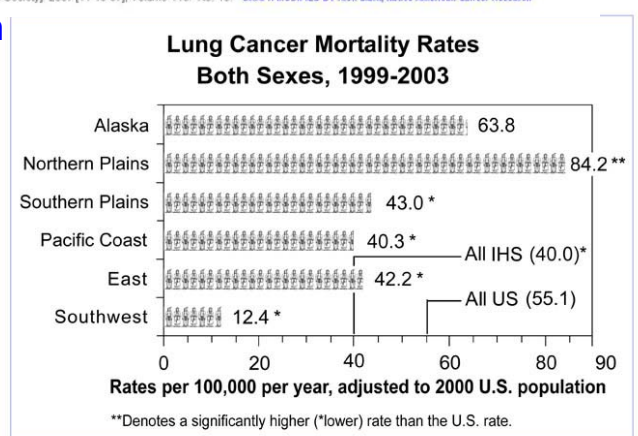
- ☞ An hour spent in a smoke-filled room is equal to smoking one cigarette.
- ☞ Secondhand smoke kills 53,000 non-smokers each year.
- ☞ Secondhand smoke is poisonous. It contains over 4,000 dangerous chemicals, including:
  - ☞ Carbon monoxide (car exhaust)
  - ☞ Ammonia (floor / toilet cleaner)
  -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



Haverkamp, et al IHS, Graphs modified by Rick Clark, NACR



## 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

Source: Renner CC, Enoch C, Patten CA, Ebbert JO, Hurt RD, Moyer TP, Provost EM. Igmik: A Form of Smokeless Tobacco Used among Alaska Natives. *Am J Health Behav.* 2005; 29: 6: 588-594.



Photos from Caroline Renner, ANTHC; 10-2005; Mayo SoE-CNP

## 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

Sources: US Surgeon General, 2001  
[http://www.CDC.gov/tobacco/sgr/sgr\\_2004/Factsheets/2.htm](http://www.CDC.gov/tobacco/sgr/sgr_2004/Factsheets/2.htm)  
US DHHS. CDC The Health Consequences of Involuntary Smoking: A Report of the Surgeon General. Atlanta, GA. 2006

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