

# Spit Tobacco Use in Indiana

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Spit tobacco, or smokeless tobacco, comes in two forms: moist snuff and chew. Snuff is a finely ground tobacco and is usually placed between the bottom lip and gum and held there. This is also referred to as “dipping”. Chewing tobacco is shredded tobacco leaves placed between the cheek and gum. Spit tobacco contains 3,000 chemicals, 28 of them have been identified as cancer-causing agents including formaldehyde, nicotine, arsenic, cadmium, and polonium-210.

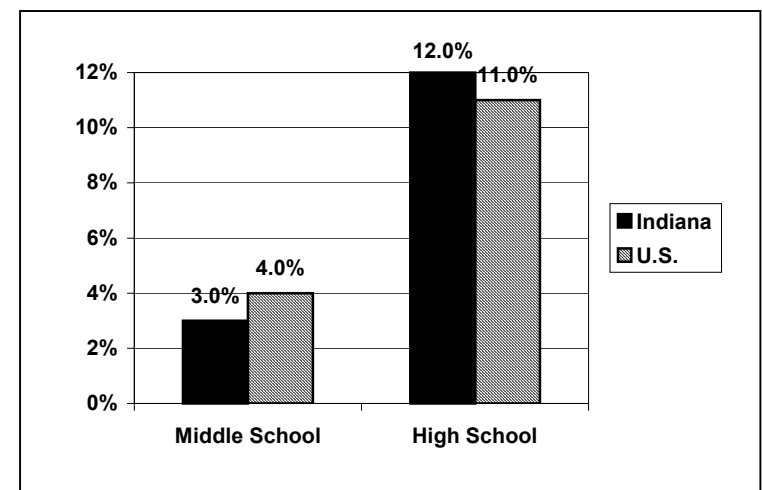
## Spit Tobacco Use, Indiana vs. U.S.

- Approximately 17% of Hoosier adults have tried spit tobacco, and of those adults nearly 22% use these tobacco products every day or some days. This is similar to the U.S. rate of 22% of adults who currently use spit tobacco.
- Of those Indiana adults who use spit or chewing tobacco every day or some days, one-fourth use less than one can of tobacco per week, one-third use 1-2 cans per week and 16% use 3-4 cans of spit tobacco per week.

## Spit Tobacco Use by Youth

- Approximately 3% of middle school and 12% of high school boys in Indiana currently use spit tobacco, these rates are similar to the national averages.

## Spit Tobacco Use Among Young Males, Indiana vs. U.S.

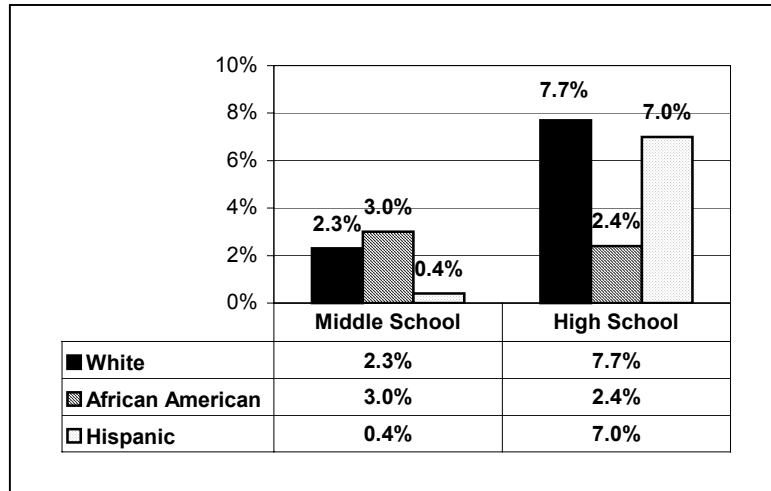


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## Indiana Spit Tobacco Users by Race/Ethnicity, Middle vs. High School, 2004



## Spit Tobacco Use by Indiana Youth by Race/Ethnicity

- White and Hispanic youth have the highest smokeless tobacco use among high school students.
- African Americans middle school and high school youth, have similar rates of use.

## Health Effects of Spit Tobacco

Holding one pinch of spit tobacco in your mouth for 30 minutes gives the same amount of nicotine as smoking 4 cigarettes. The negative effects to using spit tobacco include bad breath, spitting and stained teeth. Spit tobacco is not a safe alternate to cigarettes and is responsible for numerous health problems. People who use spit tobacco are at risk of many health problems including:

- **Cancers:** lip, esophagus, pharynx, larynx, pancreas and stomach. Users of spit tobacco are 50 times more likely to get oral cancer than non-users. These cancers can form within only 5 years of regular spit tobacco use.
- **Mouth diseases:** Leukoplakia, a disease of the mouth characterized by white patches and oral lesions on the cheeks, gums, and tongue. Studies show that 60-78% of spit tobacco users have oral lesions. During the first 3 years of use, leukoplakia occurs in more than half of smokeless tobacco users. Spit tobacco also causes gum recession increasing risk of cavities.
- **Heart diseases:** Spit tobacco increases the risk of heart attack and other heart disease as the nicotine constricts veins leading to heart problems and high blood pressure.

Sources: 2004 Indiana Adult Tobacco Survey; 1999 Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance Survey; 2004 Indiana Youth Tobacco Survey; CDC. Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance — United States, 2003. *CDC Surveillance Summaries* 2004;53(SS-2):1-96. ; CDC. Tobacco use, access, and exposure to tobacco in media among middle and high school students — United States, 2004. *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report* 2005;54(12):297-301.;HHS, Tobacco Use Among U.S. Racial/Ethnic Minority Groups — African Americans, American Indians and Alaska Natives, Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders, and Latinos: A Report of the Surgeon General, 1998; American Cancer Society, Inc. Cancer Facts and Figures 2000.