



A CUP OF HEALTH WITH CDC

No Good Alternatives to Cigarettes

Consumption of Cigarettes and Combustible Tobacco — United States, 2000–2011

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[Announcer] This program is presented by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

[Dr. Gaynes] Welcome to *A Cup of Health with CDC*, a weekly feature of the *MMWR*, the Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report. I'm your host, Dr. Robert Gaynes.

For the past 50 years, cigarette smoking has steadily declined in the US. However, people are smoking other forms of tobacco in record numbers.

Darryl Konter is with CDC's Office on Smoking and Health. He's joining us today to discuss the increasing use of non-cigarette forms of smoked tobacco. Welcome to the show, Darryl.

[Darryl Konter] Thanks. It's good to be here with you.

[Dr. Gaynes] Darryl, while cigarette use is decreasing, what other types of tobacco use are increasing?

[Darryl Konter] Our study found use of pipe tobacco was up almost 500 percent from 2000 to 2011, and large cigar use was up 233 percent in the same period. Overall, use of all types of smokable tobacco products, other than cigarettes, was up 123 percent.

[Dr. Gaynes] Why are people turning to alternative forms of tobacco in such large numbers?

[Darryl Konter] We think the biggest reason is price. Because pipe tobacco is federally taxed at a much lower rate than cigarettes, smokers have been buying pipe tobacco at stores that offer high speed rolling machines. These machines can roll a carton of cigarettes in about four minutes. So, effectively, they produce cigarettes at a big discount. Another reason is that many of the products labeled 'large cigars' under the FDA classification system are actually similar in size and shape to cigarettes and because they're classified as cigars, they're exempt from the FDA restrictions on flavorings in cigarettes. So many of these products are especially appealing to youth and young adults.

[Dr. Gaynes] Are these types of tobacco safer than cigarettes?

[Darryl Konter] Absolutely not. The Surgeon General has concluded that smoking *any* form of tobacco causes your lungs, blood vessels, and other delicate tissues to become inflamed and damaged. Over time, this damage will lead to disease. And let's be clear, any of these products that are smoked like cigarettes are just as addictive as cigarettes.

[Dr. Gaynes] Darryl, what strategies can you offer our listeners to quit *all* forms of tobacco use?

[Darryl Konter] Set a quit date and tell your family and friends you're quitting so they can support you. Get cigarettes and all other tobacco products out of your house, along with ashtrays, lighters, and other smoking accessories. Also, talk to your doctor or health care provider.

[Dr. Gaynes] Where can listeners get more information about strategies for quitting tobacco use?

[Darryl Konter] They can call 1-800-QUIT-NOW or go to the website smokefree.gov to get free help, including additional strategies that will help you quit smoking.

[Dr. Gaynes] Thanks, Darryl. I've been talking today with CDC's Darryl Konter about the increase in use of other smoked tobacco.

Pipe tobacco and cigarette –like cigars contain the same toxic chemicals that are found in cigarettes, which can lead to cancer, heart disease, and other smoking-related illnesses. Parents, teachers, and other mentors should talk with young people about the dangers of *all* forms of tobacco use.

Until next time, be well. This is Dr. Robert Gaynes for *A Cup of Health with CDC*.

[Announcer] For the most accurate health information, visit www.cdc.gov or call 1-800-CDC-INFO.