What tobacco products cause oral health problems?

Both smoked and smokeless alternative tobacco products cause oral health problems. These products include:

• Cigarettes
• Cigars
• Pipes
• Bidis

• Chewing tobacco (loose leaf, plug, twist)
• Snuff

How does tobacco use affect my oral health and appearance?

• Increases your risk of:
  ▪ Oral cancer
  ▪ Gum disease (periodontitis)
  ▪ Tooth loss
  ▪ Cavities
  ▪ Dental implant failure

• Increases the time it takes for wounds to heal in your mouth

• Decreases your ability to taste and smell

• Stains your teeth

• Causes darkening of the gums (melanosis)

• Causes bad breath and dry mouth

How will my oral health benefit if I quit using tobacco?

• Five years after you quit tobacco, your risk of getting oral cancer is cut in half

• Your teeth and gums will be healthier

• You improve your chances of keeping more of your own teeth

I want to quit using tobacco — how do I get started?

• Call VA’s tobacco quitline at 1-855-QUIT-VET (1-855-784-8838) Monday–Friday.
  Available in English & Spanish

• Sign up for VA’s SmokefreeVET text messaging program — text the word VET to 47848 (or VETesp to 47848 for Spanish) or visit smokefree.gov/VET

• Talk to your VA dentist, dental hygienist or health care provider about tobacco cessation medications and counseling that can help you quit

• Visit VA’s Tobacco & Health webpage for Veterans at publichealth.va.gov/smoking