



# Nicotine Pouch Myths versus Facts

Nicotine pouches, such as ZYN, on!<sup>®</sup>, and VELO, are small pouches packed with chemicals that include highly addictive nicotine. The pouch is placed inside the mouth between the lip and gum.<sup>1, 2</sup> Other names for nicotine pouches include “lip pillow” and “upper decky.”



## ❌ MYTH

“Tobacco Free” is a safer or healthier alternative.

## ✅ FACTS

- Marketing as “tobacco-free” doesn’t mean nicotine free.
- Nicotine is an addictive substance and is harmful to your health.
- Whether the nicotine pouches contain tobacco derived nicotine or synthetic nicotine, they are still a tobacco product.<sup>3, 4</sup>

## ❌ MYTH

Nicotine pouches have less nicotine in them than other products.

## ✅ FACTS

- Products that use synthetic nicotine have the same or similar amounts of nicotine in them as products that use nicotine from tobacco.
- Some nicotine pouches contain levels of nicotine as high as and even higher than e-cigarettes.<sup>3, 5, 6</sup>

## ❌ MYTH

Nicotine pouches can be used as a substitute or an aid to quit vaping.

## ✅ FACTS

- Nicotine pouches have not been authorized by the FDA to help with quitting smoking or vaping.
- Nicotine replacement products, like patches, gum, and lozenges (similar to hard candy) are designed to decrease nicotine levels over time to help people quit.
- Combining nicotine replacement with coaching through a quitline service, such as [QuitNowRI](#), can improve your chances of a successful quit by 50 to 70%.<sup>7, 8</sup>

## ❌ MYTH

Nicotine isn’t harmful to your health.

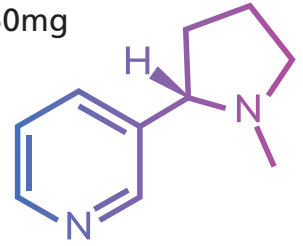
## ✅ FACTS

- “Nicotine is a highly addictive substance that research suggests is as addictive as heroin, cocaine, or alcohol.”
- Nicotine is especially harmful to people whose brains are still developing, which includes anyone younger than 25.
- In fact, the younger someone starts using nicotine, the stronger the addiction.
- Cancer-causing chemicals have been found in nicotine pouches, as well as toxic heavy metals such as lead, chromium, nickel, and uranium.<sup>2, 5, 6, 9, 10, 11</sup>




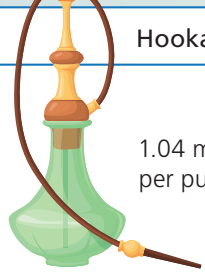

## What do we currently know about nicotine pouches?

Nicotine pouches are sold in a range of strengths, typically between 3 mg-15 mg of nicotine per pouch, but some studies have detected nicotine levels as high as 50mg per pouch.<sup>3,4</sup> Oral nicotine pouches have dramatically increased in popularity:

- 808 million pouches were sold in the first three months of 2022.
- Pouches with higher levels of nicotine were sold more frequently and faster, which demonstrates how addictive they are.<sup>12, 13</sup>



## How much nicotine is in these products?

Cigarettes	E-cigarettes/vapes	Chewing tobacco	Hookah	Nicotine pouches
				
10-12 mg per cigarette (200-240 mg per pack)	Range anywhere from 0-50 mg* per e-cigarette/vape	7.2 mg per serving (144 mg per can)	1.04 mg per puff	Range from 3-50 mg <b>PER POUCH</b>

\*Packaging on e-cigarettes often labels nicotine amounts by percentage rather than mg. If an e-cigarette contains 5% nicotine, that's 50 mg of nicotine.<sup>5</sup> Also, studies of e-cigarettes report that e-liquids often contain higher levels of nicotine than labeled. Many e-liquids labeled as containing 0% nicotine were found to contain nicotine.<sup>3, 5</sup>

## What are the harmful effects of nicotine?

### Brain


- Impacts areas of the brain responsible for decision making, memory, ability to focus, and ability to learn<sup>6, 9</sup>
- Increased vulnerability to addiction<sup>6, 9, 15, 16</sup>
- Increased risk of anxiety and depression<sup>1</sup>
- Irritability, mood swings<sup>14</sup>
- Insomnia<sup>14</sup>



### Body

- Higher risk of multiple types of cancer<sup>11, 14</sup>
- Periodontal disease<sup>15, 16</sup>
- Gum, mouth, throat irritation<sup>15, 16</sup>
- Increased blood pressure, heart rate<sup>14</sup>
- Abdominal pain, nausea<sup>15, 16</sup>
- Vomiting and diarrhea<sup>14</sup>

## What can I do to be healthier?

- If you're interested in quitting tobacco/nicotine products, connect to an evidence-based quit program such as [QuitNowRI](https://www.quitnowri.com) that offers both counseling services and FDA-approved NRT by phone, text, and web chat.
  - Call **1-800-QUIT-NOW**
  - Text '**START**' to **300500**
  - Visit [QuitNowRI.com](https://www.QuitNowRI.com) → 
- Talk to your healthcare professional about the best steps to take for your personal quit journey.

- If you have a friend or loved one who uses tobacco/nicotine products, talk with them about quitting. Tips on [supporting friends and loved ones are available at QuitNowRI](#).
- Learn more about how the tobacco industry might be targeting you: [Nicotine pouch ads follow e-cigarette marketing playbook and risk appealing to young people](#).

**QuitNowRI**

## References

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