

# Tobacco Facts and Sports

## Tobacco is bad for your health

- Nicotine is found in cigarettes and chewing tobacco. It is very addictive.
- **There are no safe alternatives to cigarettes.** Cigars, snuff, and chewing tobacco are also dangerous to your health.
- If you start using tobacco early in life you are more likely to remain addicted for life. Almost 90 percent of tobacco users begin at or before age 18.
- Smoking makes lungs black. It changes lung cells and increases the risk of lung cancer.



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## **How tobacco can impact athletic performance:**

- Nicotine narrows your blood vessels and puts added strain on your heart.
- Smoking reduces oxygen available for muscles used during sports.
- Smokers run slower and can't run as far, affecting overall athletic performance and endurance — even in teenagers trained in competitive running.
- Short-term effects of chewing tobacco can cause cracked lips, white spots, sores, and bleeding in the mouth.
- The resting heart rates of tobacco users are 2-3 beats per minute faster than those of non-tobacco users.

## **Tobacco costs more than just your health:**

- It is against school rules to use tobacco in Alaskan schools. Using tobacco could result in suspension from your sport.
- Tobacco costs \$4-\$8 a pack/can. If you had \$2,880 would you buy a year's worth of tobacco to be able to use a pack/can a day? What else could you buy?

*Sources: [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov) • U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Preventing Tobacco Use Among Young People; A Report of the Surgeon General (1994).*

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