



NEWS RELEASE

ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

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Quit the spit during 'Through With Chew Week'

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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The Alabama Department of Public Health encourages smokeless tobacco users to quit the spit during "Through With Chew Week," February 17-23.

The education campaign to decrease spit tobacco use and increase awareness of the negative health effects of using these products is an annual event begun in 1989 by the American Academy of Otolaryngology - Head and Neck Surgery.

In Alabama, 8.1 percent of adults surveyed overall had used smokeless tobacco in the past 30 days, according to the 2016 Alabama Adult Tobacco Survey. A slightly higher 9.3 percent of Alabama teens overall cited smokeless tobacco use in the past 30 days, according to the 2016 Alabama Youth Tobacco Survey.

Those who want to be "Through With Chew" can call the Alabama Tobacco Quitline (1-800-Quit-Now) for help in quitting. Quitline coaching services are available seven days a week from 6 a.m. to midnight. Services are also offered online at www.quitnowalabama.com.

The Quitline provides free, individualized coaching to help smokers and smokeless tobacco users kick their addiction. Also, the Quitline offers up to eight weeks of free nicotine patches to those medically eligible enrolled in the coaching program.

On average, smokeless tobacco products deliver a higher dose of nicotine than cigarettes, making the product more habit forming, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

"Smokeless is not harmless," said Jabari Sullen, Alabama Tobacco Quitline director. "There is no safe amount of tobacco use. Smokeless tobacco is addictive because it contains nicotine. Its use can cause oral, esophageal and pancreatic cancers, and lead to tooth loss and gum recession."

For free help to be "Through With Chew," call the Quitline at 1-800-784-8669.