



Focus on

Oral Health

*This newsletter
is designed to share
information about oral health to
all individuals interested in oral health.*

Vol. 10, No. 1 February 2005

2003 Youth Risk Behavior Survey Results...



The sixth biennial Youth Risk Behavior Survey was conducted during the spring of 2003. Data was obtained on several risk factors including tobacco use. Tobacco has devastating effects on the teeth and gums and is a risk factor for oral cancer. Some survey results follow.

Cigarette Smoking in North Dakota

- Compared to 2001, smoking in North Dakota for 2003 was down from 35 percent (2001) to 30 percent (2003) in ninth through 12th graders overall.

Cigarette Smoking Nationally

- While the 2003 numbers (30%) of students smoking in grades nine through 12 were down, North Dakota is still well above the national average of 22 percent.

Chewing Tobacco in North Dakota

- Chewing tobacco/snuff use in the past 30 days was down. Usage by students in grades seven and eight was down from 6 percent (2001) to 3 percent (2003). Usage by students in grades nine through 12 also decreased from 13 percent (2001) to 10 percent (2003).

Chewing Tobacco Nationally

- Nationally in 2003, 7 percent of students in grades nine through 12 use chewing tobacco/snuff. Here again North Dakota is well above the national average, with 10 percent using chewing tobacco/snuff.

February Is National Children's Dental Health Month...

Stomp Out Smoking!

Tobacco use causes many physical, mental and financial disparities. The following are facts from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

- ★ Tobacco use causes more than 442,000 deaths each year in the United States
- ★ Cigarettes kill more people than alcohol, illegal drugs, car accidents, suicide, homicide and AIDS combined
- ★ 75 percent of oral cancer cases are preventable and up to 90 percent are treatable if detected early

The risks of tobacco use are well documented and undeniable. Yet tobacco cessation is not always an easy subject to approach. The American Dental Hygienists Association has launched a tobacco cessation initiative called "Ask, Advise, Refer." This initiative is helping

dental hygienists to be more prepared and informed about tobacco cessation.

Hopefully, more professionals will become proactive in tobacco cessation programs. North Dakota has a tobacco quit line in operation. A simple call can point people in the right direction toward cessation.

North Dakota Quit Line

Toll free
1-866-388-QUIT (7848)

A Healthy Smile is Always in Style

Brush and floss each day.
Eat nutritious foods.
Have regular dental checkups.

ADA. American Dental Assoc. www.ada.org

Fight Decay With Xylitol.....

Have you heard the buzz about Xylitol and wondered just what it is? Xylitol is a natural sweetener that has been shown to reduce the risk of dental decay. Although there has been a lot of interest recently here in the United States, Xylitol has been around for many years. It was discovered in the 1940s when, due to sugar shortages in Europe, Scandinavian countries began to use it as a sugar substitute. By the 1950s, children in these countries were observed to have fewer cavities than children in countries still using sugar. Today, Finland leads the world in overall dental health as they continue to depend upon Xylitol as a healthful alternative to sugar.

A few commonly asked questions follow:

How does Xylitol work?

Oral bacteria take Xylitol in as food but are unable to use the sweetener in their life cycle. This results in an inability to cause cavities, as well as other important effects such as reduced adhesion of plaque, reducing transmission of bacteria, and aiding in the remineralization of the tooth. In simple terms, xylitol use reducing the risk of cavities and gum disease.

Where do I find Xylitol?

Xylitol is found naturally in fruits, nuts and vegetables. It also is used in cosmetics, medications and oral hygiene products (toothpaste, mouthrinse, etc.) as well as several readily available mints, candies and gum. You'll find these in local department and grocery stores. A few to look for may include Orbit, Koolers, Altiods, and Starbucks After Coffee Gum, as well as Victoria's Secret's mints. Granulated Xylitol crystals also can be found in health food stores.

Is Xylitol for everyone?

Yes. Because it contains 40 percent fewer calories, Xylitol is a healthy alternative to regular table sugar. Xylitol also may be recommended by your dental team as a therapy for individuals at high risk for cavities.



Xylitol

Supplies . . .

For program supplies, call the Oral Health Program: 701.328.4930 • 1.800.472.2286 • Fax: 701.328.1412

Regional Oral Health Consultants

— NORTHEAST REGION —
Barbara Collins, RDH
701.284.6899

— SOUTHEAST REGION —
Hollie Maas-Harrington, BS, RDH
701.683.9072

— CENTRAL REGION —
Jody Van Beek, RDH
701.250.9163

— SOUTHWEST
CENTRAL REGION —
Marlene Hulm, RDH
701.663.7962

— NORTHWEST REGION —
Tracey Haugenoe, RDH
701.774.8708

— SOUTHWEST REGION —
Carla Kelly, RDH
701.523.3423

— STATE OFFICE —
Maija Beyer, RDH
Oral Health Program Director
701.328.2356
800.472.2286 (toll-free)



NORTH DAKOTA
DEPARTMENT of HEALTH

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Oral Health Program
Division of Family Health
North Dakota Department of Health
600 E. Boulevard Ave., Dept. 301
Bismarck, N.D. 58505-0200

State Health Officer: Dr. Terry Dwelle

Section Chief: Dr. John Joyce

Division Director: Kim Senn

Editor: Maija Beyer

Associate Editor: Jody Van Beek