Nicotine Pouch Sales Rising, Including Those With Highest Concentrations

Researchers at the American Cancer Society stress health interventions to continue reducing nicotine pouch use.

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A new study led by researchers at the American Cancer Society (ACS) shows overall sales of nicotine pouches increased during 2019-2022. The data also showed sales of 8mg nicotine concentration level (highest available) products rose more rapidly than those with different concentration levels. The findings were published November 16 in the Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA) Network Open.

In recent years, oral nicotine pouches have been increasing in popularity. The product is placed between the cheek and the gum. They do not contain tobacco, but they do contain nicotine, flavorings, sweeteners, and plant-based fibers. Some brand names come in colorful packaging that looks like mint containers. These products deliver varying amounts of the addictive chemical nicotine, which can negatively impact your learning, attention span, and proneness to addiction.

“Our findings are important as nicotine is a highly addictive substance. The growing popularity of nicotine pouches may increase the risk of children finding these products to be attractive and risk-averse health outcomes and addiction to nicotine,” said Dr. Nigar Nargis, senior scientific director, tobacco control research at the American Cancer Society and senior author of the study. “Health campaigns warning of potential adverse health outcomes of nicotine pouches are needed.”

Study authors analyzed data comprising weekly Nielsen IQ Retail Scanner point of purchase sales from August 2019 through March 2022, for 2,182 local trade areas in the contiguous 48 states and Washington, D.C. Sales trends of four nicotine pouch brands (Zyn, Rogue, On!, and Velo) were analyzed.

The results showed overall sales increased from 126.06 million units from August to December 2019 to 808.14 million units from January to March 2022. Zyn (58.8%) led the overall unit share followed by ON! (24.6%), Velo (12.1%), and Rogue (4.8%) during the study period. Zyn sales peaked in September 2021 and increased more than other brands from October 2021 to March 2022, however, Rogue sales increased more rapidly than all other brands.

“It’s important to note that no manufacturer has received marketing authorization from the United

States Food and Drug Administration to market nicotine pouches as a tobacco product or approved as a cessation drug," added Dr. Anuja Majmundar, lead author of the study and former ACS researcher.

Other ACS authors on the study include: Dr. Priti Bandi, Dr. Samuel Asare, and Ashley Xue.

https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jamanetworkopen/fullarticle/2798449

Resources from the American Cancer Society about tobacco products and smoking cessation can be found here.

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