



FHNS Tobacco-Free Sport Policy



Field Hockey Nova Scotia (FHNS) Tobacco-Free Sport Policy below is new and applies to all member schools.

All FHNS activities will be tobacco free for all players, coaches, parents, spectators and officials. Tobacco-free means no smoking, snuffing, dipping or chewing tobacco. Tobacco use and sport are counter to health and athletic performance. We encourage everyone not to use tobacco at FHNS events so that we that we may reduce the number of young people starting to use tobacco, support people attempting to quit or reduce their tobacco use and protect everyone from exposure to second-hand smoke. The Tobacco-Free Sport logo is a friendly reminder to encourage people not to use tobacco where they see it displayed.

Please respect the NSSAF tobacco-free policy and encourage players and spectators not to smoke or use any other form of tobacco including chew or spit tobacco at sport events, games or practices.

Tobacco use can affect athletes' health and decrease athletic performance. Nicotine in cigarettes and spit tobacco (chew) narrows blood vessels, can give you higher blood pressure and irregular heartbeats and puts added strain on your heart. Narrowed blood vessels can slow your reaction time and cause dizziness.

Other Possible Effects of Spit / Chew Tobacco:

- Mouth sores that do not heal or bleed easily, or white or red leathery patches where tobacco is held in the mouth (e.g., in the cheeks, gums, or tongue.)
- Tooth and gum disease including cavities, lost teeth, bad breath, and painful sores. The grit and sand in spit tobacco can scratch your teeth and wear away your tooth enamel. Gums injured from the chemicals in spit tobacco will pull away from your teeth, leaving them sensitive to hot and cold. This damage is permanent.
- Cancer of the mouth (lip, tongue, cheek, floor, and roof of the mouth) and throat.
- A recent study of Pittsburgh Pirate players in major and minor leagues found that smokeless tobacco use went from 41% of players in 1991 to 25% in 2000. Much of the downward trend was credited to the 1993 ban on chewing tobacco in the minor leagues. "As players progress to the major leagues, they're less likely to be using." Researchers noted a matching decrease in oral leukoplakia, whitish lesions that form on the inside of the mouth that can become cancerous. Those numbers dropped from 22.6% to 9.4%.

The statistics, published in *Medicine & Science in Sports & Exercise* (August 2006), bode well not only for professional ballplayers but also for fans and high school and college athletes. "One of the things that [managers] try and tell the players is that they're role models, and should be setting a good example for the youth".

The Smokers' Helpline 1-877-513-5333 is a free, confidential service for anyone who wants information or help to cut down or stop using tobacco.

For more information on how to implement the Tobacco-Free Sport and Recreation initiative within other sport or recreation organizations, funding to support promotion of the policy, information about spit / chew tobacco and the tobacco industry go to <http://www.hpclearinghouse.ca/act/tfsr.htm> or call 423-6183 Ext 247.