

WHAT ARE FACT SHEETS?

KEY MESSAGES

- ESTOC (European Smokeless Tobacco Council) had its consultant, ENVIRON International, develop a series of "Fact Sheets" that describe what is known about the relationship between Swedish snus and a variety of health outcomes and behaviors.
- The Fact Sheets address health effects as well as issues related to tobacco harm reduction.
- Each Fact Sheet summarizes the available scientific information on a particular topic in language that can be easily understood by an informed audience.
- The ENVIRON scientists consulted with internal and external peers in preparing the Fact Sheets. Their collective judgment was used to convey the important issues of each topic and to draw conclusions when warranted.
- The fact Sheets can be used to communicate key messages to the public and media. However, the Fact Sheets are "evergreen" and will be updated as new information becomes available.
- Consumers should make their own choices about whether or not to use a particular product.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Why are "Fact Sheets" necessary?

The public is understandably concerned about health risks encountered in everyday life. However, it is difficult for a layperson to make sense of the constant flow of sometimes contradictory information on a particular topic. ESTOC staff (including those who are not scientists) will be called on to communicate, in easy-to-understand language, what is known about the relationship between the use of snus and a variety of topics. Fact Sheets provide a tool to do this.

How were the topics selected?

The Fact Sheets reflect areas of interest to the public, scientists, and policymakers. Many of them address specific health concerns, for example, what is known about the relationship between using snus and developing oral or pancreatic cancer? Other Fact Sheets address social issues, such as the public health implications of recommending that smokers can reduce harm to themselves by switching to snus use.

Who prepared the Fact Sheets?

The Fact Sheets were prepared by ENVIRON International Corporation, a scientific consulting firm familiar with the English-language literature on Swedish snus. ENVIRON scientists critically

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reviewed all the credible, available information in preparing the Fact Sheets. Each Fact Sheet presents an overall summary, states what public health agencies (such as the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC)), and other scientists have concluded, and highlight the important issues that must be considered in drawing conclusions. The Fact Sheets acknowledge uncertainties and note that in some situations different scientists might reach different conclusions. The Fact Sheets also provide some basic information on the scientific methods relevant to each topic.

Are these Fact Sheets just a way to promote smokeless tobacco?

The Fact Sheets represent the best attempt to summarize what is known (whether positive or negative) about every topic. ESTOC believes that smokeless tobacco manufacturers and the public are best served by a complete and accurate understanding of the available information surrounding each topic. In the end, consumers have the responsibility to make their own choices about whether or not to use a particular product.

Why do the Fact Sheets have to be updated?

Science is constantly evolving and new studies are continually being published. Research findings are then synthesized into the existing body of scientific literature. The prevailing opinion can change over time, as new information is developed. Consequently, each Fact Sheet is clearly dated, and ESTOC has a process in place to ensure periodic updates occur.

Where can I obtain the references cited in the Fact Sheets?

For purposes of brevity and clarity, the Fact Sheets limit the number of relevant references cited, however, each Fact Sheet is based on a more complete set of references cited. This complete list is available on the ESTOC web site.