



DEDICATED TO THE
HEALTH OF ALL CHILDREN

THE OFFICIAL NEWSMAGAZINE OF THE AMERICAN ACADEMY OF PEDIATRICS

AAP News

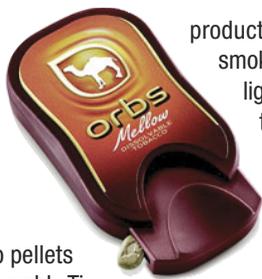
Volume 31 • Number 8
August 2010
www.aapnews.org

AAP News Parent Plus

INFORMATION FROM YOUR PEDIATRICIAN

Smokeless tobacco products a potential poison for children

Smokeless tobacco products may look like candy to young children, but these alternative nicotine products can be poisonous if they fall into small hands and mouths.



Dissolvable candy-like smokeless tobacco pellets can be tempting for children because they resemble Tic Tac candies both in their shape and packaging and are flavored with cinnamon or mint. The Food and Drug Administration outlawed tobacco that tastes like fruit, candy or cloves in 2009 because the flavors mask the tobacco taste and appeal to adolescents. Non-tobacco flavored nicotine products still are sold legally, however.

One of the most common calls parents make to poison control centers is about children who eat tobacco products. Most children are under age 6, and more than 70% are under 1 year of age, according to a study in *Pediatrics*, the journal of the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP).

The No. 1 source of ingestion is cigarettes, but other tobacco

products increasingly are becoming a concern. These smokeless products contain an average of 0.83 milligrams (mg) of nicotine. Ingesting just 1 mg of nicotine can cause a child to become nauseous and vomit. Larger doses can cause more severe reactions, including weakness, convulsions, unresponsiveness and rapid breathing.

The AAP offers the following advice to parents who suspect their young child has swallowed tobacco or nicotine products:

- If the child still has some of the product in his or her mouth, make the child spit it out or remove it with your fingers
- Keep the substance and package, if available, in case the child has a reaction.
- If the child is not conscious or breathing or seems to be having convulsions or a seizure, call 911 or your local emergency number immediately. Otherwise, call the poison center hotline at 1-800-222-1222 for instructions.

— Trisha Koriath

©2010 American Academy of Pediatrics. This information may be freely copied and distributed with proper attribution.