DRUG FACT SHEET

Tobacco

Tobacco contains 4,000 chemicals and byproducts that make it harmful. The most dangerous byproducts are nicotine, tar and carbon monoxide.

Class of drug:	Stimulant (but also acts as a sedative)
Main active ingredient:	Nicotine
What it looks like:	It is a brownish mixture of dried, cured and processed leaves. Nicotine is a naturally occurring colorless liquid that turns brown when burned and acquires the odor of tobacco when exposed to air.
Street names:	Smokes, Cigs, Butts, Chew, Snuff
How it is used:	Tobacco is smoked in the form of cigarettes and cigars and through pipes; chewed, dipped or sniffed in the form of chewing or spit tobacco or snuff.
Duration of high:	Tobacco effects are felt within 10 seconds of inhalation (cigarette smokers). Cigar, pipe and smokeless tobacco users absorb the nicotine more slowly. The acute effects of nicotine dissipate in a few minutes. Nicotine stays in your system three to four days.
Withdrawal symptoms:	Headaches, dizziness, anxiety, irritability, coughing, dry throat, hunger (weight gain)
Effects:	**Physical**—rush of adrenaline, drop in skin temperature, suppressed appetite and increased blood pressure, respiration and heart rate **Mental**—reduced anxiety and increased relaxation **Long-term**—diseases and conditions, such as: cancer, coronary heart disease, chronic lung disease, stroke, emphysema, chronic bronchitis, gastric ulcers, premature wrinkling.

Tobacco use is the single largest preventable cause of death and disease in the United States today.

Illinois information

In Illinois, tobacco use claims 16,600 lives and costs the state $4.1 billion in health care bills a year. The number of high school students who smoke is 17.5 percent which is more than the adult rate of 16.9 percent.

(Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids, 2011)

Sources: Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids, American Lung Association, American Cancer Society, American Heart Association & Illinois Tobacco-Free Communities, www.igniteil.org/stats, NIDA Research Report Series