



AUSTRALIAN DENTAL ASSOCIATION INC.

SMOKING AND ORAL CANCER: THE IMPORTANCE OF EARLY DETECTION AND WARNING LABELS ON CIGARETTE PACKETS

The consequences of smoking

Tobacco is the second major cause of death worldwide... and it is estimated that almost a quarter of adult Australians or 3.2 million people are regular smokers...

Oral cancer

Dentists are particularly concerned about cancer of the mouth and throat. The use of tobacco in any form causes mouth and throat cancer and the length of time a person smokes and the amount they smoke increases the risk of cancer...

Prof. Chris O'Brien, from the Sydney Head and Neck Institute, has reported that the Institute diagnoses 1,000 new cancers to the head and neck each year. The vast majority of these cancers, particularly those to the mouth and throat, are directly attributable to cigarette smoking...

Check with your dentist

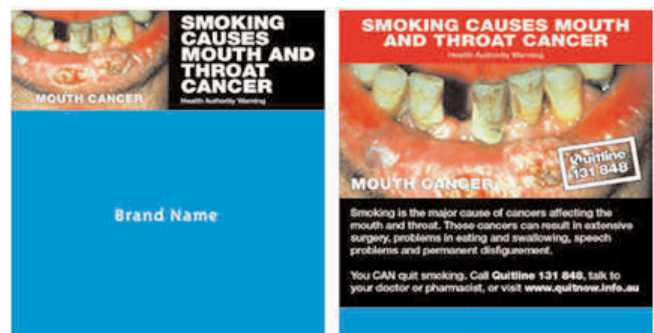
Dentists play a key role in identifying the early pre-cancerous changes in the mouth resulting from smoking. Early detection is vital to save lives. Even when cancer is not present, dentists can often detect changes in the lining of the mouths of smokers...

Warning labels on cigarette packets

On 1 March 2006, new warning labels for all cigarette packets were introduced in Australia. According to the Department of Health and Ageing, warning labels cover 30% of the front and 90% of the back of cigarette packets...

The introduction of the new health warnings (see example below) are despite a long history of resistance by the tobacco industry. In 1978, for example, British American Tobacco wrote "... we can expect health warnings on all tobacco products ... within a fairly short time, and this is to be regretted. Obviously [we] should avoid health warnings on all tobacco products for just as long as we can"...

Although the tobacco industry has long resisted change, increased warning labels will save lives. The ADA strongly supports greater warning labels on cigarette packets and commends the Government on this initiative. The ADA urges ongoing measures that emphasise primary prevention and strict control of tobacco products.



Front of Cigarette Pack (representation only)

Back of Cigarette Pack (representation only)

Figure accessed from http://www.quitnow.info.au/warnings/cigar\_mouth.htm

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