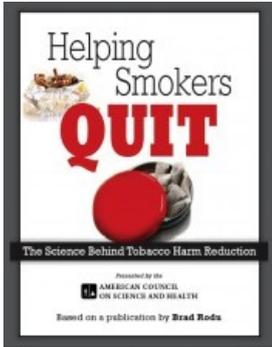


Louisville Professor Brad Rodu s call for more access for smokers to smoke-free nicotine

By ACSH Staff — May 12, 2015



Dr. Brad Rodu is a Professor of Medicine at the University of Louisville. He

has been an ACSH advisor for many years, and [has written](#) [1] or [co-written many](#) [2] of our publications on tobacco harm reduction.

He was also a member of the ACSH Panel at the American Academy for the Advancement of Science ([AAAS](#)) [conclave](#) [3] which presented our perspectives on Harm Reduction: Policy Change to Reduce the Global Toll of Smoking-Related Disease in Vancouver in 2012.

His recent op-ed, [Smoke-free tobacco can save lives](#) [4], explains how smokers craving for nicotine sickens and kills them from the *smoke*, not from the nicotine. Thus, allowing smokers ready access to smoke-free nicotine would have the effect of preventing almost all of the smoking-related illness and death. Smoking-related illnesses are the most important preventable killers in our nation, yet governments and regulators are tightening restrictions on methods to help smokers quit all over the land. Just this week, San Francisco banned smokeless tobacco in outdoor arenas: what possible public-health benefit can that yield, we wonder.

Dr. Rodu s words speak volumes: *While our federal government dreams of a tobacco-free society, 42 million Americans continue to smoke cigarettes and nearly half a million die each year. That s 1,300 smoker deaths.*

Every. Single. Day.

Tobacco policy in the U.S. is driven by prohibitionists who insist that smokers quit nicotine and tobacco altogether. They ignore the fact that nicotine, although addictive, is not the major cause of any disease associated with smoking. Nicotine is similar to caffeine, which is addictive but safely consumed by millions daily in coffee, tea and cola drinks. Science shows that it s the smoke that kills, yet the government refuses to tell smokers about far safer alternative products like smokeless tobacco and e-cigarettes.

It doesn t have to be that way. Over the past century in Sweden, men have smoked less and used more smokeless tobacco (a spit-free product called snus) than in any other Western country. The result: Swedish men have the developed world s lowest rates of lung cancer and smoking-related

deaths.

Numerous research studies document that the health risks of smokeless tobacco use are so low as to be barely measurable, even for mouth cancer !"

His conclusion: **"Switching from cigarettes to smoke-free tobacco products yields almost all of the health benefits of quitting altogether. That s the life-saving truth.**

ACSH s Dr. Gil Ross had this comment: In a sane world, Dr. Rodu would not have to make a case for smoke-free products; it would be an obvious benefit for smokers. Instead, as he points out and as we have noted on numerous occasions, trying to get the facts about harm reduction out to smokers has been thwarted by a conspiracy involving government public health officials, academics, and Big Pharma to keep smokers hooked on deadly combusted tobacco. Their reasons are complex but always antithetical to public health, mainly involving keeping their cash flowing from pharmaceutical company donations and cigarette excise taxes. For a UK/EU perspective matching Dr. Rodu s in passion and evidence, also see Clive Bates *cri de coeur*, [Death by Regulation](#), [5] condemning the lethal ban on Swedish snus (smokeless) in the EU."

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Links

[1] <http://acsh.org/2012/02/helping-smokers-quit-the-science-behind-tobacco-harm-reduction/>

[2] <http://acsh.org/2007/04/smokeless-tobacco-as-harm-reduction-for-smokers/>

[3] <http://louisville.edu/uofltoday/campus-news/uofl-research-shows-substituting-with-smokeless-tobacco-saves-lives>

[4] <http://www.signaltribunenewspaper.com/?p=27428>

[5] <http://www.clivebates.com/?p=434>