



A Game-Changer
for Women in the
World's Pursuit of a
Smoke-Free Future

EMPOWERMENT

IN A POUCH



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Special edition for
International Women's Day

HOW POUCHES ARE SECURING WOMEN'S HEALTH

Smoke-free success starts with women

Throughout the course of their lives, women's health is shaped by multiple factors, from cardiovascular disease and cancer to mental wellbeing, caregiving pressures and access to effective prevention tools.

Tobacco use remains one of the most powerful drivers of avoidable illness and early death among women globally, making smoking cessation central to wider goals of health equity among genders.

Sweden is on the brink of becoming the world's first smoke-free country, defined as adult smoking prevalence below 5%. That achievement has only been possible because progress has increasingly reached women, a group historically underserved by traditional quit-smoking approaches.

Today, Swedish women are quitting smoking at a pace that's six times faster than their counterparts across the European region, transforming national health outcomes and providing a roadmap for gender-responsive public health throughout the world.

Ensuring no one is left behind

For decades, Swedish women found it harder than men to quit smoking. Ground-breaking evidence from Smoke Free Sweden shows oral nicotine pouches are helping change this trajectory. Its Power in a Pouch report documents how these smoke-free, tobacco-free alternatives accelerate quit rates by fitting more naturally into women's daily lives.

Sweden's earlier gains were driven largely by snus, adopted mainly by men. Nicotine pouches have broadened access, appealing to women who did not take up previous alternatives.

Placed under the lip, they deliver pharmaceutical-grade nicotine without combustion and carry risk profiles comparable to established nicotine replacement therapies listed by the World Health Organization.

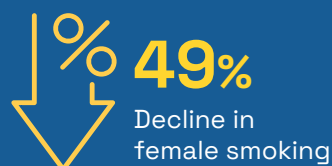
Since their introduction in 2016, women's smoking rates in Sweden almost halved, narrowing the gender gap in quitting. This progress is already reflected in some of Europe's lowest smoking-related cancer rates, underscoring the profound health dividends of replacing cigarettes with safer alternatives.

Sweden's experience shows what is possible when innovation meets inclusion, empowering women with practical tools to quit smoking and delivering healthier futures for families and communities worldwide.



Sweden's transformation

With the **EU's lowest smoking rate (5.3%)**, Sweden is set to become the first country in the world to achieve official 'smoke-free' status, thanks to its embrace of safer alternatives like snus, vapes and nicotine pouches. Since the introduction of pouches in 2016:



6x faster

reduction in female smoking than the rest of Europe



Sweden is on target to become the world's first smoke-free country

Sources and methodology are available [here](#)

EVIDENCE OF A HEALTH REVOLUTION

The No.1 quitting aid for women

Survey data analysed in Power in a Pouch shows that women rate nicotine pouches as the most effective method for quitting smoking. Among female respondents, pouches dramatically outperformed other cessation aids, including nicotine gum and vapes.

These preferences are reflected in population-level outcomes. Since nicotine pouches became widely available, women's quit-smoking rates have increased by 200%, contributing to one of the steepest declines in female smoking prevalence observed across the globe.

User verdict

#1 QUIT METHOD

MOST EFFECTIVE (Both Genders Rate #1)

Women Rate Pouches:

3X better than vapes

56% better than nicotine gum

User loyalty

34% of women would seek pouches abroad if banned



Features that support sustained quitting



Women who switched from cigarettes consistently identified characteristics of nicotine pouches that supported long-term quitting:

- **Socially considerate**, without smoke, vapour or smell
- **Ease of use** in work and social settings
- **Choice of flavours and strengths**
- **Flexibility** that fits daily routines

Rather than requiring behavioural disruption, nicotine pouches integrate easily into everyday life. This practicality helps explain why many women are able to quit smoking successfully and maintain that change over time.

Why women choose pouches

FLAVOURS 60% cite as key

60%

LESS HARMFUL 47% recognise

47%

TOBACCO-FREE 46% value

46%



Real voices:

“Use anywhere - no smell, no one minds”

“No embarrassment around kids - no guilt”

“Pouches just worked better – felt more normal”

“It’s not like a vape that runs out of battery”



IMPLICATIONS FOR POLICY & WOMEN'S HEALTH

What female ex-smokers say about nicotine pouches

Focus group discussions with female ex-smokers revealed a compelling, consistent theme: nicotine pouches offered the most realistic, respectful and sustainable way to quit smoking.

Unlike some other aids for quitting, nicotine pouches were not only seen as effective, but also as compatible with everyday life. Participants repeatedly described nicotine pouches as socially considerate, clean and stigma-free - qualities that made it easier to quit smoking without drawing attention or feeling marginalised.

Nicotine pouches are seen as a cleaner, socially acceptable substitute for smoking. Many began using pouches after trying to quit cigarettes or vaping. They described pouches as less harmful, fresher and more tactful - especially in social or professional contexts:



“My friend used to smoke a lot, then she switched to nicotine pouches. No smell, way fresher. I’ve tried different flavours - now I’ve quit smoking completely.”

“It feels less harmful. I train a lot - smoking ruined my stamina. With nicotine pouches I can keep working out.”

“I smoked before I had kids, but when I started working again it didn’t feel right smelling like smoke around my child.”

“It doesn’t smell, it doesn’t show and you don’t have to go outside.”

“I started using nicotine pouches when I quit smoking. It was easy to switch.”

“I can use them anywhere. At brunch, in the office, on a train - no one sees, no one smells, no one minds.”

“They don’t bulk up my bag. No vape to charge, no bottle of liquid, no lighters - just a tiny tin.”



What Sweden’s success shows

Sweden’s progress illustrates the impact of risk-proportionate regulation that recognises differences between combustible cigarettes and safer nicotine alternatives.

Female daily smoking prevalence in Sweden has dropped to just 5.7%, one-third of the EU average and a 49% decline since 2015.

According to the WHO, European women are quitting six times slower than Swedes - emphasising the urgent need for an innovative approach.

Maintaining momentum

Proposals to restrict or ban nicotine pouches in other countries should be considered in light of Sweden’s success. Limiting access to products that women already use to quit smoking risks slowing progress in reducing smoking-related harm among women.

This International Women’s Day

Smoke Free Sweden urges policymakers to recognise nicotine pouches as an effective cessation tool for women and to ensure that regulation reflects real-world evidence.

Supporting women with practical, effective alternatives to cigarettes remains one of the most reliable ways to advance smoke-free public health goals.

Read the full report [here](#)