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Snuff sales puff up as credit crunch and smoking ban take hold

By [Daily Mail Reporter](#)

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Not to be sniffed at: Snuff sales are on the rise as the credit crunch and smoking ban hit home

The centuries-old ancient habit of snorting snuff is experiencing a renaissance due to the credit crunch.

Sales of traditional finely ground tobacco have rocketed at one firm by a staggering 78 per cent in the last year alone.

Although the 2006 smoking ban led to an immediate rise in sales, the boom has continued as people turn to snuff because it is much cheaper than cigarettes.

One 25 gramme pot of snuff can last a heavy smoker one week - at a cost of just 24 pence day and a saving of about 30 pounds a week.

Young smokers are also taking it up as it now comes in various fruity flavours.

Snuff is also not as harmful as cigarettes because it doesn't contain tar.

Users sprinkle a small amount of the powdery-substance on the back of their hand before inhaling it through the nose.

The effects get to work in just a few minutes and disperse cravings without having to stand outside a pub or restaurant in the cold.

Roderick Lawrie, chief executive of Toque Snuff based in Berwick, Northumberland, said his sales figures have risen by a whopping 78 per cent in the last year.

Mr Lawrie said: 'When you smoke a cigarette you take in carcinogens and tar which can cause lung disease and cancer.

'English snuff however is made from very fine ground tobacco making it much less harmful on the lungs.

'It is definitely going through a renaissance as the recent rise in sales we have seen is phenomenal.

'We are riding on the crest of a wave and our sales have gone up by 6.5 per cent every month for the last year.'



As tobacco sales feel the pinch thanks to the smoking ban, those of snuff are on the rise

The first snuff mill was thought to have been established in Seville, Spain, in the 16th century.

Nasal snuff's popularity became popular soon after with it being the tobacco of choice for Europe's aristocratic class.

By 1702, it had become more widespread among English commoners, especially miners as they were not allowed to light matches.

It remained that way until the 1980s when the mines closed down.

Mr Lawrie now sells 16 flavours of the powder including toast and marmalade, chocolate, espresso and peanut butter - as well as original.

And about 50 per cent of his customers are aged between 18 and 25 years old.

Mr Lawrie added: "Snuff is definitely going through a renaissance.

'We have been speaking to the people who make our tins and they have predicted a 15 per cent increase in sales growth over the next few years.

'We however believe it will be far more than that - we are becoming absolutely swamped with orders and enquiries.

'I believe the credit crunch is probably helping with the boost in sales.

'Heavy smokers could save 35 pounds a week which would amount to thousands over the years.

'It is fantastic that this 300-year-old industry which died a death 20 years ago is now experiencing a renaissance.'

Professor John Britton, chairman of the cigarette and tobacco committee at the Royal College of Physicians, said snuff has both advantages and disadvantages.

He said: 'Switching to snuff would lower your chances of lung cancer and pulmonary disease by at least 90 per cent.

'However the chances of nasal cancer is increased by two or three fold.

'Snuff is not considered safe but it isn't as hazardous as smoking so isn't completely an unconventional choice.' But officials for anti-smoking campaign group ASH have advised smokers never to use snuff.

A spokeswoman said: 'ASH would not go as far as recommending snuff as it is much better for smokers concerned about their health to use medicinal nicotine products like patches.

'It is still a tobacco product so it does contain nicotine which is addictive.

'However most of the harm that comes from cigarettes is through smoking and inhaling the poisons and carcinogens.

'For a smoker who does not want to give up, they could use snuff as a short term alternative.'



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