# Survey reveals high usage of snus and nicotine pouches among professional football players



A survey conducted by Loughborough University and commissioned by the Professional Footballers’ Association (PFA) reveals that around one in five male and female professional football players use snus, nicotine pouches, or both. According to the study, 18% of male players from Premier League or EFL clubs and 22% of Women’s Super League (WSL) players are current users.

The survey included responses from 628 male and 51 female players. It's suggested that the actual usage figures could be higher, as players might be reluctant to disclose their use, even anonymously. Forty-two percent of male players and 39% of female players have tried these products at least once.

Users cited improved mental readiness and relaxation as benefits, with 41% of male and 64% of female players using it to relax, commonly after training or matches. The study also mentions that some players use these products as an appetite suppressant and a coping mechanism to handle the demands of the game.

However, the survey also highlights potential negative effects, including an increased risk of oesophageal and pancreatic cancer, cardiovascular disease, and mouth lesions. Snus, which contains tobacco, is illegal to sell in the UK but legal to use, whereas tobacco-free nicotine pouches are legal to both buy and use.

Peer influence was significant, with 56% of male and 73% of female players starting to use these products to fit in with senior teammates. Many users indicated wanting to quit, although the prevalence of use among peers was a substantial barrier.

The report recommends personalized and external support for those seeking to quit, rather than club bans, which have proven ineffective. It also emphasizes the risk of adverse anti-doping findings if products are contaminated.