

Doctors Warn Over Gulf Nicotine Pouch Rise

Flavoured sachets hooking young users and raising heart risks, physicians warn

TDT | Manama
Mohammed Darwish

Nicotine pouches are growing rapidly across the Gulf, with doctors cautioning that the small flavoured sachets carry serious health risks despite containing no tobacco or smoke.

The pouches are tucked beneath the lip, releasing nicotine through the gum into the bloodstream over about 30 minutes. While physicians consider them less harmful than cigarettes for smokers who quit tobacco entirely, they say the pouches are neither safe nor a proven quitting aid.

Dr. Kadhem Al Halwachi, head of the smoking cessation clinic at Manama Medical Centre, warned that some pouches



Dr Wafa Ajur, vice-president and board member of the Bahrain Cancer Society

deliver more nicotine than a standard cigarette. Repeated use can damage gums and teeth, raise blood pressure, accelerate the heartbeat and affect cholesterol levels.

“There is no health benefit,” he said, adding that long-term effects remain unknown because the products are still relatively new.

Dr Wafa Ajur, vice-president of the Bahrain Cancer Society,



Dr Kadhem Al Halwachi, family medicine consultant and head of the smoking cessation clinic at Manama Medical Centre

said pouches sit below vapes and cigarettes on the harm scale as no aerosol is inhaled, but risks around addiction, oral health and cardiovascular effects remain significant. She urged smokers seeking to quit to use licensed nicotine-replacement therapies instead.

The World Health Organisation has flagged sweet flavours and social media marketing as key concerns. A 2026 Saudi study found nearly half of pouch users were aged 18 to 24. Nicotine exposure during adolescence can impair brain development and raise long-term addiction risk.

Industry forecasts value the GCC market at \$1.1 billion, with 19.5 per cent annual growth projected through 2030.

Nicotine Pouch Use by the Numbers

92.2%	Users surveyed were men
46.2%	Aged 18-24
49.5%	Former smokers
29.4%	Current smokers
21.1%	Never smoked
1-5	pouches/day - Most common daily use
72%	Said pouches helped reduce nicotine cravings



Know When To Call Police

MyGov App Ideal for Non-Urgent Police Reports, Public Urged to Call 999 in Emergencies

● The MyGov app allows residents to submit a range of police reports securely online.

● Emergencies, assaults and thefts requiring scene inspections should be reported directly to the nearest police station or security centre.

● Prompt reporting helps police preserve evidence and respond more effectively.

TDT | Manama
Neethu V

The Interior Ministry is encouraging residents to use the MyGov app for non-urgent police reports while reminding the public that emergencies and incidents requiring an immediate police response should be reported directly to the police.

Speaking on the Interior Ministry’s Al Aman social media programme, Hidd Police Station Head Colonel Dr Osama Bahar said the MyGov app provides an innovative, secure and user-friendly platform that enables people to access police services electronically.

He explained that while the app is suitable for many report types, situations requiring urgent assistance or an immediate police presence should always



“Quick reporting helps preserve evidence and ensures officers can respond effectively.”

COLONEL DR OSAMA BAHAR ON INTERIOR MINISTRY’S AL AMAN PROGRAMME

be reported by phone so that patrols can be dispatched without delay.

Colonel Dr Bahar noted that incidents requiring officers to verify the scene or collect evidence also need direct communication with the relevant security centre.

“If the report involves an assault, the victim needs to meet an officer for a detailed exam-

ination and to complete the necessary procedures,” he said.

He added that in cases of theft or robbery, officers need to inspect the scene and collect physical evidence promptly to ensure nothing that could support the investigation is lost.

He urged the public to contact the nearest police station or relevant security centre as quickly as possible in such situations instead of relying solely on electronic reporting.

The MyGov app, however, remains an effective option for reporting non-urgent cases, including lost property, financial claims with criminal aspects, defamation, insults, theft reports that do not require immediate intervention, and electronic fraud, provided users submit the necessary supporting evidence.

Interior ministry encourages residents to download the MyGov app and register to benefit from its digital services, while reminding them to choose the reporting method best suited to the nature and urgency of each incident.

Flower Prices Rise by Up to 25%

● Flower prices up by 25%

● Single roses from 350 fils

● Dutch, Ecuador flowers cost 40% more

TDT | Manama
Mohammed Darwish

Flower prices in Bahrain have risen by as much as 25 pc after higher air freight bills pushed up the cost of imports from Africa.

Traders said the rise had been driven by dearer aviation fuel and changes in cargo charges, although some wholesale prices have begun to fall as flight routes return to normal.

Hassan Attiya, a flower importer, said most bouquets were now selling for between BD7 and BD10, compared with BD3 to BD5 before the rise.

He said a batch of 25 roses that once cost BD4.5 at source had climbed to BD8.5 before falling back to about BD5.

All imported flowers arrive by air, he said, with Bahrain and other Gulf markets buying each week from Kenya, Ethiopia, Colombia, Thailand, Sri Lanka, the Netherlands and Ecuador. Some Gulf buyers also route certain varieties through airports in Riyadh.

African growers remain the



“Every flower sold in Bahrain has travelled thousands of kilometres by air from growers around the world.”

- HASSAN ATIYA

main source for the trade, while flowers from the Netherlands and Ecuador cost about 40 pc more.

Attiya said packaging costs

had also soared. Polystyrene boxes used by florists had risen from BD4 to BD22 after disruption linked to the closure of the Strait of Hormuz. The boxes had first climbed to BD11 before doubling again.

The cheapest rose now sells for about 350 fils, including tax, up from 200 fils. Some high-end shops charge between 500 fils and BD1 for a single stem, depending on the wrapping and presentation.

Prices are based mainly on the number of flowers, stem length and size rather than colour. Roses dyed blue or black can cost more because of the added treatment.

Attiya said rose prices in producing countries ranged from 12 to 36 fils a stem.

Imported flowers are checked by the veterinary authorities before they are released for sale to ensure they are free from disease, bacteria and viruses.

Complete Healthcare For Women

- ▶ Pregnancy & delivery care
- ▶ Fertility treatment: IUI, Follicular study
- ▶ Menstrual problems
- ▶ PCOD (Polycystic Ovary Syndrome)
- ▶ Endometriosis
- ▶ STD testing and treatment
- ▶ Vaginal infections
- ▶ Urinary tract infections
- ▶ Contraception: Copper T (IUD), Implant
- ▶ Menopause management
- ▶ Cancer screening & HPV vaccination

Women’s Health Screening Package

- ▶ Ultrasound Scan
- ▶ Gyne Consultation

BD 15



DR. YOGITA MUSALE
MBBS, MD, DGO, MRCPI (Ireland)
Specialist - Obs & Gyne

For Appointments @ Hidd 1746 4848 3695 5777

