



For Immediate Release

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Anti-tobacco Initiative Launches National Smokeless Tobacco Collection Drive to Commemorate the Great American Smokeout

Operation Tobacco Free kicks-off “Ditch the Dip” campaign to inspire smokeless tobacco users to quit.

Clearwater, FL—November 1, 2016—[Operation Tobacco Free](#) (OTF)—a prosocial initiative sponsored by [TeaZa® Energy](#)—is launching a national campaign called “*Ditch the Dip*” to encourage people to refuse to use tobacco products and commemorate the American Cancer Society’s [Great American Smokeout](#). The nation-wide “dip drive” allows people to cash-in their unused, unopened cans of smokeless tobacco in exchange for free TeaZa® Energy—a tobacco-free, nicotine-free, smokeless tobacco alternative. Participation is available by mail through the date of the Great American Smokeout, November 17, 2016. Some restrictions apply, for complete details on how to participate visit TeaZaEnergy.com/DitchtheDip.

OTF is a prosocial initiative launched in 2015 that discourages tobacco use and inspires healthy lifestyles through education and community outreach. During its first year, OTF has proudly donated tens of thousands of dollars in product and sponsorships to youth sports teams, health programs and even a [tobacco de-addiction study](#) in partnership with a nonprofit chapter at a major university, [Project RISHI at the University of Southern California](#) (USCPR).

The “Ditch the Dip” campaign kicked-off with a “dip drive” collection event Friday, October 28, 2016 at US Patriot Tactical located at MacDill Air Force Base in Tampa, FL. At the event, OTF representatives gave away free TeaZa® Energy—a tobacco-free, nicotine free, smokeless tobacco alternative—in exchange for unopened cans of unused smokeless tobacco.

“It seemed appropriate to launch the campaign at the base given that tobacco addiction is known to affect a high percentage of active military personnel and veterans,” said Brent Agin, MD, President and CEO of TeaZa® Energy.

According to a 2011 survey published by the Department of Defense, close to half of all military service members (49.2%) used a nicotine product in the past 12 months.¹

The same survey found in 2011, 12.8 percent of all military personnel reported using a smokeless tobacco product in the past month, compared to 3.2 percent of the general population at that time.²

The *Ditch the Dip* campaign is focused on reaching the estimated 9 million smokeless tobacco users in the US.³

“Most anti-tobacco campaigns focus on smoking. We are passionate about raising awareness of the health dangers associated with smokeless tobacco use,” Dr. Agin said. His inspiration to support the anti-tobacco movement grew from consumer response to his innovative TeaZa® Energy pouches. The herb and vitamin mini-tea bags weren’t intended to be an alternative to tobacco, but [many customers say](#) that TeaZa® has helped them supplement or stop their tobacco habit, and the [preliminary results](#) of the USCPR pilot study support that. According to USCPR representatives, 60% of participants in the pilot study reported as much as a 60% decrease in the use of tobacco products when using TeaZa® Energy.

Educating the public about the harms of tobacco use is an integral part of OTF’s mission to end smokeless tobacco use in the US.

Anyone can *Take the Pledge* to refuse to use tobacco products on [OTF’s website](#). Individuals who *Take the Pledge* acknowledge that tobacco in any form is harmful, including cigarettes, cigars, spit tobacco and any other product containing nicotine. All tobacco products, including smokeless tobacco, contain nicotine which is highly addictive. Chew contains at least 28 chemicals known to cause cancer and up to twice the amount of nicotine as a cigarette. Smokeless tobacco use can cause oral lesions, oral cancer, esophageal cancer, pancreatic cancer, heart disease, gum disease and death.⁴

To [apply for a sponsorship](#), [take the pledge](#), [become an ambassador](#) and learn more about OTF visit TeaZaEnergy.com/OperationTobaccoFree.

About Operation Tobacco Free

Operation Tobacco Free (OTF) is a prosocial initiative sponsored by TeaZa® Energy that serves to discourage tobacco use and inspire healthy lifestyles through education, community outreach and support of youth sports and health programs. For more information visit: TeaZaEnergy.com/OperationTobaccoFree.

About TeaZa Energy

TeaZa® Energy is an oral energy supplement formulated by a physician with natural ingredients. It is an herb and vitamin tea packaged in a small pouch. TeaZa® provides smooth energy and focus with no crash and curbs cravings for snacks or tobacco products. TeaZa® Energy is available in 7 flavors: Peppermint, Black Cherry, Bangin’ Black Cherry Bomb, Spicy Cinnamon, Tropical, Coffee and Fire; and caffeine-free TeaZa® Chill with Relora is available in Cool Mint and Tropical flavors. TeaZa® is produced, packaged and distributed out of Clearwater, FL. TeaZa® Energy is available online in the US and overseas and is in select retail locations throughout the US. For more information visit TeaZaEnergy.com.

¹ "2011 FINAL Department of Defense Survey of Health Related Behaviors Among Active Duty Military Personnel." *2011 FINAL Department of Defense Survey of Health Related Behaviors Among Active Duty Military Personnel*. N.p., n.d. Web. 26 Oct. 2016. <<https://www.documentcloud.org/documents/694942-2011-final-department-of-defense-survey-of.html>>.

² "2011 FINAL Department of Defense Survey of Health Related Behaviors Among Active Duty Military Personnel." *2011 FINAL Department of Defense Survey of Health Related Behaviors Among Active Duty Military Personnel*. N.p., n.d. Web. 26 Oct. 2016. <<https://www.documentcloud.org/documents/694942-2011-final-department-of-defense-survey-of.html>>.

³"How Many People Use Tobacco?" *Cancer.org*. American Cancer Society, n.d. Web. 29 Oct. 2015. <<http://www.cancer.org/cancer/cancercauses/tobaccocancer/questionsaboutsmokingtobaccoandhealth/questions-about-smoking-to-bacco-and-health-how-many-use>>.

⁴"Smokeless Tobacco and Cancer." National Cancer Institute. N.p., n.d. Web. 25 Sept. 2015. <<http://www.cancer.gov/about-cancer/causes-prevention/risk/tobacco/smokeless-fact-sheet>>.

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