

**Tobacco- Chewing Youngster**  
(Rosenblum, USC School of Dentistry)

A women patient calls her dentist to refer her 16 yr. old son to him for a new patient examination. She reports that since he began to play high school baseball, he has become habituated to chewing tobacco. She asked the dentist if he would do what he could to encourage her son to quit.

When the young man presented for his examination, he was quite apprehensive. The dentist looked in his mouth and on examining the site where the boy held the tobacco, he exclaimed, "Oh my God, what's this? This looks like a pre-cancerous lesion!" He then went on to over-dramatize his concern about a minor change in tissue appearance that he believed would revert to normal as soon as the irritation was withdrawn. The dentist went on to say, "We are going to cut out a piece of your lip and have it tested."

When the dentist called the oral surgeon to request a biopsy, he instructed the specialists to leave one suture long to annoy the young man so he will remember the ordeal. The surgeon complied, and as a result of the experience, the youngster quit using chewing tobacco. Is this an ethical dilemma?