

# **JIM C – HEALTH TERMS**

## **MONDAY - 03/16/2009**

**Tobacco use kills nearly half a million Americans each year, with one in every six U.S. deaths the result of smoking.**

### **HOW DID THE TERM “*TOBACCO*” ORIGINATE?**

***Definition:* Any of several plants belonging to the genus *Nicotiana*, of the nightshade family, esp. one of those species, as *N. tabacum*, whose leaves are prepared for smoking or chewing or as snuff.**

***Online Etymology:* 1588, from Spanish *tabaco*, in part from an Arawakan (probably Taino) language of the Caribbean, said to mean "a roll of tobacco leaves" or "a kind of pipe for smoking tobacco." It was also a name of medicinal herbs from circa 1410, from Arabic *tabbaq*, attested since the 9<sup>th</sup> century. So the word may be a European one transferred to an American plant.**

***History (Columbia Encyclopedia):* The use of tobacco originated among the indigenous inhabitants of the Western Hemisphere in pre-Columbian times. Tobacco was introduced into Spain and Portugal in the mid-16<sup>th</sup> century, initially for its supposed virtues as a panacea. It spread to other European countries and then to Asia and Africa, where its use became general in the 17<sup>th</sup> century.**

***C W (1994 Congressional Testimony):* "Nicotine is not addictive"**

***M of Z (Today):* Tobacco = Nicotine, An Extremely Addictive Drug**