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## Nicotine addictive

A report by the US Surgeon-General, Everett Koop, would declare nicotine an addictive drug. Dr Ronald Davis, head of the federal Office of Smoking and Health, said in Washington yesterday.

Dr Davis said government officials had been saying for years that nicotine was an addictive drug "just like cocaine, just like heroin and other drugs that people commonly accept as addicting".

"But this report looks at the evidence in far greater detail than we've ever looked at before," he said.

The report will be the first by a federal official with as high a rank as the Surgeon-General to declare nicotine addictive.

Although Dr Davis did not say what steps should be taken once the Surgeon-General issued his report, he questioned some of the ways in which cigarettes are distributed.

"Why . . . do we sell tobacco products in vending machines?" he asked. "We don't allow other addicting drugs to be sold in vending machines."

"When we call this drug an addicting drug, we have to take it more seriously than we currently do."

—AAP-Reuters

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