

WHAT TEENS AND PARENTS NEED TO KNOW ABOUT

E-cigarettes and Vaping



Did you know?

- Vaping among middle and high school students has increased. It is now more common than the use of regular cigarettes.
- The main reason teens vape is because of the candy or fruit flavors added.
- The sale of e-cigarettes and vaping products are illegal to anyone under age 21.
- Vaping is not allowed in many workplaces and public spaces. This is a part of California's smoke-free laws.

What is vaping? What are e-cigarettes?

Vaping is the use of electronic cigarettes (e-cigarettes). E-cigarettes are also known as *e-cigs*, *vape pens*, *vapes*, *mods*, *e-hookahs*, *JUUL*, *Suorin*, or *MarkTen*®. E-cigarettes are battery-powered devices that heat up an e-liquid. The heated e-liquid becomes a vapor or aerosol that is inhaled into the user's lungs. E-cigarettes are often designed to look like real cigarettes, pens, universal serial bus (USB) flash drives, or other everyday items.

What are in e-cigarettes?

E-cigarettes may contain nicotine or marijuana, which are both highly addictive drugs. They contain toxic metals and chemicals which are cancer-causing substances. E-cigarettes are not well regulated by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA). Therefore, there is no way of knowing exactly how much nicotine or other harmful chemicals are entering your body. Some e-cigarettes labeled as nicotine-free still contain nicotine.

Is vaping safe?

Vaping and the use of any products containing nicotine is unsafe and harmful. Although nicotine exposure can damage brain development up until the age of 25, the effects on the brain are lifelong. The effects can impact memory, learning, mood, attention, and impulse control.

The e-liquid nicotine can be toxic and sometimes deadly if swallowed, inhaled or touched. Some e-cigarette devices have exploded, causing injuries, burns or even death. E-cigarette devices and e-liquids must be kept away from pets and children at all times.

E-liquids can come in fruit, candy, chocolate or menthol flavors. The flavorings make it seem like these products are safe and healthier than regular cigarettes. Several cities, including San Francisco, have started to ban flavored e-liquids and vaping products.

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What are the risks of vaping for teens?

- Vape products contain nicotine, an addictive drug, which may lead to a life-long addiction.
- Vaping may increase your chances of smoking regular cigarettes. It may also increase your risk for addiction of other drugs in the future.
- Vaping can irritate your throat, mouth, and lungs as well as damage your lungs.
- Nicotine harms brain development.
- There are higher levels of toxins in teens who vape compared to those who do not.
- Health effects of vaping, especially long-term effects, are not well known yet.

What can teens do?

- If you're thinking about quitting vaping or smoking, talk to your doctor, counselor, or a trusted adult.
- Find a reason why you want to quit.
- Find another activity instead of vaping to deal with stressors or triggers. For example: chew gum, avoid temptations, stay physically active, or get involved in school activities.
- Set a date to quit.
- Do not give up. If you are not able to quit the first or second time, keep trying.

What can parents do?

- Be patient and ready to provide support. Your goal is to have a conversation, not to deliver a lecture.
- Ask questions and listen to what your teen says. Defer judgement; offer understanding and empathy.
- Talk with your teen about the health risks and dangers of vaping.
- Set clear expectations about vaping and share your concerns with your teen.
- Set an example by not vaping or using tobacco. YOU can be the greatest influence in your teen's life.

Need Help?

californiasmokershelpline.org – **California Smokers' Helpline** – call **1-800-662-8887** for free, confidential telephone counseling for ages 14 and older.

teen.smokefree.gov – **Teen Smokefree** – provides online support to help you quit, including a texting service.

e-cigarettes.surgeongeneral.gov – **U.S. Surgeon General** – for facts and risks on e-cigarettes.

kp.org/mydoctor – **My Doctor Online** – for more information and tools about quitting tobacco.