

What Parents Need to Know About Teen Vaping and E-Cigarettes



More than 5,700 kids start vaping every day.¹ As teen vaping continues to rise, it's important for parents to start the conversation with their children about the dangers of vaping and e-cigarettes.



What is Vaping?

Vaping is the act of inhaling and exhaling aerosol or vapor produced by an electronic cigarette (e-cigarette). E-cigarettes are battery-powered devices filled with liquid cartridges that can contain nicotine, marijuana or other harmful chemicals.

E-cigarettes are sometimes called “e-cigs,” “vape-pens,” “vapes,” “mods,” and “e-hookahs.”



E-cigarettes Come in Many Shapes and Sizes

If your child is vaping or using e-cigarettes, you may not even know it. Made to help teens hide their habit, some look like USB flash drives, highlighters, pens and other everyday items.

Others look like regular cigarettes, cigars or pipes.

Currently the most popular e-cigarette among young adults is **JUUL**. JUUL is an e-cigarette that looks like a USB flash drive. Many JUUL pods contain high levels of nicotine. One JUUL pod claims to contain the same amount of nicotine as one pack of 20 cigarettes. JUUL pods, along with other e-cigarettes, come in many flavors making them appealing to young adults.



The Risks for Kids and Older Teens

Many teens believe e-cigarettes and vaping are less harmful than tobacco. Sixty-six percent of teens believe there is just flavoring in e-cigarettes. Thirteen percent claim to not know.²

Although e-cigarettes do not contain tobacco, they contain nicotine, which is highly addictive.



The exposure to nicotine during adolescence can:

- Affect brain development
- Impact learning
- Decrease memory
- Affect ability to pay attention and retain information
- Increase risk for future addiction to other drugs

There are other ways vaping and e-cigarettes can harm your body. The aerosol inhaled can contain harmful and toxic chemicals. Some of these chemicals include:

- Acrolein (used as a weed killer and can cause irreversible lung damage)
- Diacetyl (a chemical flavoring linked to serious lung disease)
- Diethylene glycol (a toxic chemical used in antifreeze and linked to lung disease.)



Teen Vaping Continues to Rise

Vaping and e-cigarette use continues to grow among youth. During 2017 and 2018, e-cigarette use among young adults went up by 1.5 million.³ In 2018, more than 3.6 million U.S. middle and high school students used e-cigarettes in the past 30 days.⁴

Many middle and high school students are vaping because they feel “it’s trendy” and “makes them look cool.” Others are vaping for appetite control and weight loss.

Despite being under age, many businesses sell e-cigarettes illegally to teens without asking for an ID. Kids are also purchasing them on the internet.



Schools are Taking Action

Because e-cigarettes do not look like tobacco products, students are using them unnoticed in school bathrooms and classrooms.

Vaping in schools is becoming a serious problem. If students are caught vaping or using e-cigarettes, many schools are:

- Having students sign behavioral contracts
- Suspending or enforcing detention
- Limiting participation in school events, clubs, and sports activities
- Offering students the option to attend vaping education classes



Start the Discussion Now

As a parent, you play an important role in protecting your child from e-cigarettes. Open communication is key. Take time to explain to them why vaping and using e-cigarettes is harmful. Kids may not realize there is nicotine or other chemicals in e-cigarettes. They also may not realize that e-cigarettes can harm their lungs and affect brain development.

Encourage your child to learn the facts. Please visit www.cdc.gov/e-cigarettes for more information or for tips on how to talk to your child about vaping and e-cigarettes.

¹ Source 1) American Lung Association. www.lung.org/stop-smoking/vape-talk/

² Source 2) US Department of Health and Human Services. www.cdc.gov/tobacco/data_statistics/sgr/e-cigarettes/pdfs/2016_sgr_entire_report_508.pdf

³ Source 3) U.S. Food and Drug Administration. www.fda.gov/news-events/press-announcements/results-2018-national-youth-tobacco-survey-show-dramatic-increase-e-cigarette-use-among-youth-over

⁴ Source 4) National Institute of Drug Abuse. <https://www.drugabuse.gov/related-topics/trends-statistics/infographics/teens-e-cigarettes>
National Center for Disease Control and Prevention, Smoking and Tobacco Use The Child Mind Institute, Teen Vaping: What You Need To Know

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