

Health Risks of Vaping & Electronic Cigarette Use

Other Names:

- Juuling (Juul is the most popular brand of electronic cigarettes)

What do they look like?

Vapes can look like **small pens, computer memory sticks, or car key fobs**. They are easy to hide in a fist or pocket. They can even be plugged into a USB drive on a laptop to recharge.

Prevalence:

They are becoming very common in schools and on **college campuses**.

In a [2017 CDC survey](#), 44.9% of high schoolers in the United States have tried electronic cigarettes, and 24.1% of high schoolers had used one in the past 30 days.

Why does this matter?

- Electronic cigarettes come in flavors and designs that **appeal to kids**.
 - There are hundreds of flavor options including: marshmallow, blue raspberry, cotton candy, and sour gummy worms.
 - They are also designed to be small and sleek. They are rechargeable, plug into any USB adapter, and are easy to hide in pockets, fists, or shirt sleeves.
- They are not being regulated.
- They are **highly addictive**.
 - In a recent study, 63% of teen JUUL users didn't know that it contains nicotine.
 - [Most people](#) assume that e-cigarette liquid is just flavored water.
- There are likely **long-term health consequences**.



In 2016, the U.S. Surgeon General declared the skyrocketing use of e-cigarettes among the nation's kids, teens, and young adults a major health concern. He concluded that e-cigarettes are addictive and harmful, especially to developing brains.



• Are they safe?

- The belief that vaping is a “healthier” alternative to smoking is a **MYTH**.
 - For adult cigarette smokers, research has not yet shown that e-cigarettes help quit smoking. They are **NOT** recommended for smoking cessation. The most effective way to quit smoking is “the patch”, prescribed medication, and/or therapy. Talk to your doctor about the best method to help you quit smoking.
 - For non-smokers, vaping has no benefits. The nicotine in a hit (inhalation) of vaping causes a short-term sensation of stimulation or calm, but the feeling wears off quickly. Users are tempted to take hit after hit, which leads to nicotine addiction. This is the same nicotine addiction from traditional cigarettes. [A recent study](#) showed that teens who vape are much more likely to go on to try regular cigarettes.
- The amount of nicotine in **one JUUL cartridge** (~200 puffs) is equal to the amount of nicotine in an **entire pack of cigarettes**.
- Electronic cigarettes have been found to contain many toxins that **cause cancer, birth defects, or reproductive harm**, such as:
 - heavy metals including tin, nickel, chromium, manganese, and arsenic.
 - chemicals like antifreeze compounds, acetaldehyde, formaldehyde, isoprene, toluene, and n-nitrosornicotine.

What can you do? **Be informed and talk to your teen!**

- Explain nicotine’s addictive properties, and how it can affect memory and concentration in the developing brain.
- Inform teens of the harmful metals and chemicals that enter their bodies when they vape. These toxins may not make them feel poorly now, but over time they will affect their health.
- If you are a smoker, or a former smoker, discuss with your children how difficult it is to quit once you get started.

Additional Information:

- <https://www.healthychildren.org/English/health-issues/conditions/tobacco/Pages/Juuling-Get-the-Facts.aspx>
- <https://www.healthychildren.org/English/health-issues/conditions/tobacco/Pages/Facts-For-Parents-About-E-Cigarettes-Electronic-Nicotine-Delivery-Systems.aspx>
- <https://www.aap.org/en-us/Documents/FinalAbridgedVapingJuulingDabbingECHOmay2018-jap.pdf>
- <https://truthinitiative.org/news/4-things-parents-need-know-about-juul-and-nicotine-addiction>
- <http://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/136/5/1018>