

# E-Cigarettes

**U.S. statistics report a decline in cigarette use by teens and adults. Years of anti-smoking campaigns and ads have been a success. Kids, teens and adults now know the health risks that are linked to smoking cigarettes. Policies that prohibit cigarette smoking in businesses and buildings have also helped reduce cigarette use.**

However, battery-powered smoking devices called electronic cigarettes, or e-cigarettes, are a new and increasing threat. E-cigarettes use a cartridge that contains a liquid. A heating device converts the liquid to a vapor that is inhaled. Kids called e-cigarette use – vaping.

Companies market E-cigarettes as a safe alternative to smoking. They do not burn tobacco, so the teen inhales no smoke or tar. However, the liquid in the cartridge contains nicotine and chemicals.

The smoker inhales the nicotine in the vapor. It enters the body through the lungs. In addition to being highly addictive in teens, nicotine also has negative effects on the heart, nervous system, and brain.

Teens underestimate health risks. Nicotine dependence and addiction is one such risk. Because marketing promotes e-cigarettes as safe, many teens ignore the fact that they are still exposed to nicotine and other chemicals. They misjudge their ability to quit using the e-cigarette because of a nicotine addiction. Many experts tell us that e-cigarette use actually leads to smoking cigarettes.

E-cigarettes contain flavorings. Bubblegum, chocolate and thin mint are a few of thousands of flavor choices. Bright packaging of e-cigarettes also attracts teens. It all makes the e-cigarette seem even more harmless.

Unlike cigarettes, the government does not yet regulate e-cigarettes. Some states have banned their sale to teens. However, teens can easily obtain e-cigarettes on the Internet. The Surgeon General has declared that e-cigarette use among youth is a significant public health concern.

When you talk to your teen about the health risks of smoking, discuss the dangers of e-cigarette use. If your teen is using e-cigarettes to kick a smoking habit, find other methods to stop smoking. Do not allow e-cigarette use or smoking in your home.



*Brought to you by Parent Help Line at HSHS St. John's Children's Hospital  
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