E-Cigarettes

Electronic cigarettes (e-cigarettes) entered the U.S. marketplace around 2007. Since 2014, they have been the most commonly used tobacco product among youth. In 2018, e-cigarette use (referred to as ‘vaping’) reached epidemic levels.

What are e-cigarettes?

E-cigarettes are tobacco products. Some resemble regular cigarettes, cigars, pipes and some have a modern, sleek design and look like writing pens or USB sticks. The products are commonly known as ENDS – electronic nicotine delivery system(s).

Other common names:
- Mods
- Hookah pens
- Vape sticks
- Personal vaporizers (PV)
- Tank systems
- Smoke Juice

Whether it’s an e-cigarette, vape pen, e-hookah, using an electronic cigarette is called “vaping”. Stores who sell mostly e-cigarettes and e-juice are called “vape shops.”

How do e-cigarettes work?

Most e-cigarettes have a battery, a heating element, and place to hold a liquid (such as a cartridge or pod). As the user draws on the device, the battery heats the e-liquid to produce aerosol, not a water vapor. The aerosol is then inhaled into the lungs.

Contact Information

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For more information, visit: dshs.texas.gov/tobacco

In Texas, an individual must be 21 years old to buy or own an e-cigarette.

Ready to Quit? Call the Texas Quitline at 1-877-YES-QUIT.
National Data

In 2018, 20.8% of U.S. high school students reported using e-cigarettes in the past 30 days. This is a 9.1% increase compared to 2017. From 2017-2018, U.S. middle school students who used e-cigarettes in the past 30 days increased from 3.3% to 4.9%.

Texas Data

According to the 2018 Texas Youth Tobacco Survey, 13% of youth used e-cigarettes in the past 30 days. This means that 18.9% of high school students and 6.0% of middle school students used e-cigarettes in the past 30 days.

Associated Dangers

- Most e-cigarettes contain nicotine, which can harm adolescent brain development. Using nicotine in adolescence can harm the parts of the brain that control attention, learning, mood, and impulse control.
- Some e-cigarette flavorings may be safe to eat, but not to breathe. This is because the gut can process more substances than the lungs.
- A common ingredient in e-cigarette flavoring, diacetyl, causes bronchiolitis obliterans, known as "popcorn lung".
- Defective e-cigarette batteries have caused fires and explosions. Some explosions have resulted in serious injuries and death.
- Children and adults have been poisoned by swallowing, breathing, or absorbing e-cigarette liquid through their skin or eyes.
- There have been reports of youth and young adults experiencing seizures after vaping. Seizures or convulsions are potential side effects of nicotine poisoning.
- The Food and Drug Administration has not found any e-cigarette to be safe and effective in helping smokers quit.

If smokers are ready to quit, call the Texas Quitline at 1-877-YES-QUIT or talk with their doctor.

For more information, visit Dshs.texas.gov/tobacco.

**Sources for this document are available upon request.**