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5 facts about vaping to talk about with your teen

by Trisha Koriath, Staff Writer

Would you recognize an e-cigarette if you saw it? Not all e-cigarettes look alike, and vaping is easy to hide.

Electronic nicotine devices can look like a pen, a computer memory stick, a car key fob or even an asthma inhaler. Instead of inhaling tobacco smoke from a cigarette, e-cigarette users inhale vapor from liquid "e-juice" that has been heated with a battery-powered coil. This is called vaping. The juice is flavored and usually contains nicotine and other chemicals.

E-cigarettes are unhealthy and addictive. They're also wildly popular among kids.

Pediatricians have been hearing from patients that they and their friends use e-cigarettes, according to Susanne E. Tanski, M.D., M.P.H., FAAP, a tobacco prevention expert from the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP).

E-cigarettes are the most commonly used tobacco product among youths. New research estimates that about 3 million adolescents vape.



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Here's what you should know about teen vaping trends:

- **Kids might use different words to talk about e-cigarettes and vaping.** For example, "Juuling" is a popular word among Dr. Tanski's patients to describe using a brand of e-cigarette. About one in four kids who use e-cigarettes also tries "dripping." Instead of using a mouthpiece to vape, they drip the liquid directly onto a heat coil. This makes the vapor thicker and stronger.
- **Kids can order "e-juice" on the internet.** The legal age to buy e-cigarettes is 18 years, but online stores don't always ask for proof of age.
- **E-cigarette juices are sold in flavors like fruit, candy, coffee and chocolate.** Most have the addictive ingredient nicotine. The more kids vape, the more hooked they become. "This is potent stuff," Dr. Tanski said.



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- **Kids who vape just once are more likely to try other types of tobacco.** Their developing brains make it easier for them to get hooked, according to a recent study.
- **E-cigarettes may not help people quit using tobacco.** Some adults use e-cigarettes when they want to stop smoking tobacco cigarettes. While a recent report found e-cigarettes are "less toxic" than cigarettes, most people who use e-cigarettes do not quit using cigarettes.

The healthiest option is for parents and their children to quit, according to the AAP.

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