

VAPING CONVERSATIONS

A GUIDE ABOUT E-CIGARETTES AND “VAPES”

TALK EARLY
TALK OFTEN

SHERBURNE COUNTY
Substance Use
Prevention
COALITION

BEFORE THE TALK

- Be patient and ready to listen.
- Avoid criticism and encourage an open dialogue.
- Remember your goal is to have a conversation, not to provide a lecture.
- Try asking the following questions first to gather responses, and then provide the facts.

START THE CONVERSATION

What are e-cigarettes?

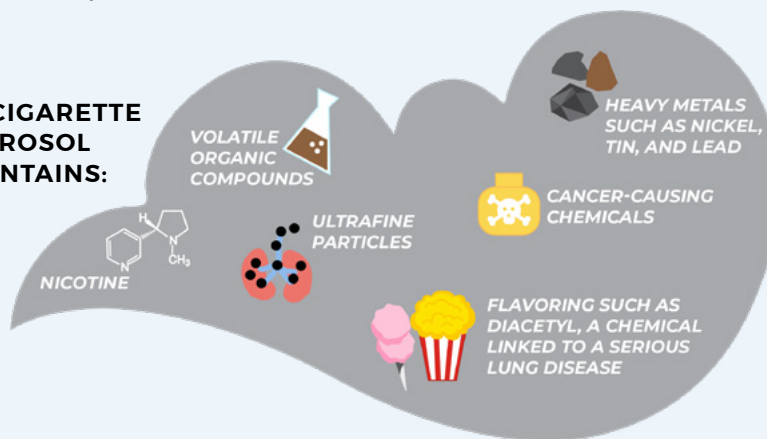
- E-cigarettes are battery operated devices that people use to inhale and exhale a chemical-filled aerosol.
- E-cigarettes come in various shapes and sizes. Some vapes are small and discreet and resemble USB flash drives, pens or other everyday items. Some are disposable while others can be reused by charging the device.
- E-cigarettes can be used to deliver nicotine, cannabis and other drugs.



What do you think is in e-cigarette aerosol?

E-cigarettes heat e-liquid or “e-juice” into an aerosol that users inhale. It’s not just harmless water vapor. Additionally, when the e-liquid heats up, more toxic chemicals are formed.

E-CIGARETTE AEROSOL CONTAINS:



The aerosol from e-cigarettes is not safe to breathe in and contains chemicals also found in cigarette smoke, which are known to cause cancer as well as lung and heart disease.

What is nicotine and why is it bad for you?

- Nicotine is an addictive and poisonous substance found in most tobacco products, including vapes.
- Nicotine exposure during adolescence can harm the developing brain and can cause addiction.
- Using nicotine as a youth may make it harder to concentrate, learn, or control impulses.
- Nicotine dependence from using vapes can also increase feelings of depression and anxiety. The more teens vape, the worse they may feel.

What is being vaped?

Although many substances can be vaped, teens and young adults most commonly vape flavored e-liquids with nicotine or cannabis.

HIGH LEVELS OF NICOTINE

The amount of nicotine can range, but most e-liquids contain high levels of nicotine. Many of the popular disposable vape devices can contain as much nicotine as 10 to 26 packs of cigarettes per device.

Young people are being introduced to a high amount of nicotine, developing a tolerance quickly, and become addicted as a result. The vape market continues to expand with new devices, increased nicotine, and increased puffs, which only fuels the popularity and addictiveness of these products.

Note: Cannabis, which may also be called marijuana, weed, or pot, refers to the dried flowers, leaves, stems, and seeds of the cannabis plant.

CANNABIS OR OTHER DRUGS

Increasingly, cannabis ingredients are found in vapes, including THC (the psychoactive compound in cannabis that creates a sense of being high), the leaf form of cannabis, CBD, or other derivatives like delta-8.

Delta-8 THC is widely available in a variety of products. Delta-8 has psychoactive and intoxicating effects, similar to regular cannabis (delta-9 THC). Although delta-8 is marketed as having less of a high than delta-9, products often contain large doses leading to intoxication and potential poisoning.

Similar to nicotine, cannabis use can harm the developing brain.

Vapes are sometimes used to inhale other drugs, as well.

How many youth use e-cigarettes or vapes?

About 1 in 7 MN high school students reported vaping in the past month on the 2023 MN Youth Tobacco Survey (MYTS); however, it's important to challenge students' perceptions of norms as they often overestimate how many of their peers vape. Research shows that such overestimations increase the risk that they will vape to 'be normal' or just like their peers.

Why do young people use e-cigarettes and how are they getting them?

According to the 2023 MYTS, the most common reasons young people report using e-cigarettes were curiosity, to get a nicotine buzz, because friends and family vape, to manage stress or anxiety, and the appealing flavors. E-cigarette marketing efforts have included child-friendly flavorings and misinformation related to the safety of vaping products. Most students report getting their vapes through other people rather than buying them directly.

What are the signs of vaping?

- Look for changes in behavior (anxiety, irritability, difficulty concentrating, etc.)
- Physical symptoms or side effects may include headaches, cough, sore throat, chest pain, dizziness, and trouble breathing
- Decreased caffeine use (may develop a sensitivity to caffeine because both nicotine and caffeine are stimulants)
- Increased thirst/nosebleeds due to some chemicals used in e-juices drying out the mouth and nose
- Questionable items since vape pens can look like markers or USB flash drives and some devices are disposable, so look for discarded devices in the trash
- Sweet smells since vapes come in lots of flavors, so take note of scents in their rooms, vehicles, or on their clothes

How can you help someone who is vaping?

You can encourage them to stop using or seek help from a parent, teacher, or other caring adult. If your child is vaping, they may be addicted to nicotine. Give them the help they need to quit. My Life, My Quit is a free and confidential service for teens who want to quit. Text "START" to 36072 or visit mn.mylifemyquit.org. There are also apps to help youth quit, including [quitSTART](https://quitSTART.teen.smokefree.gov) (teen.smokefree.gov).

TALK EARLY, TALK OFTEN

Consider this an ongoing conversation. Choose informal times to talk, such as in the car, during dinner, or while watching TV. When you first bring up the subject, your child might be caught off guard and reluctant to engage. But the more you do something, the easier it gets. Ensure you are talking to your child about everyday things, so it makes it easier when you need to discuss something more serious.

Visit the SUP website for additional resources, including conversation starters and helpful videos: sherburnesupcoalition.org

Sources: Cannabis and Your Health (health.state.mn.us); Delta-8 THC (fda.gov); "How to Talk to Your Kids About Vaping" (lung.org/ecigs); Know the Risks: E-cigarettes & Young People (e-cigarettes.surgeongeneral.gov); MN Youth Tobacco Survey (MYTS); "Vaping Guide for Parents" (drugfree.org)

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