Smoking and Vaping around Youth who have Asthma

Smoke triggers asthma

Tobacco smoke contains over 7,000 chemicals and is a common trigger for asthma attacks. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention advises people who have asthma to stay away from tobacco smoke.

Youth with asthma experience greater exposure to secondhand smoke

On the 2017 Minnesota Youth Tobacco Survey (MYTS), one in five students in grades 6-12 reported they have asthma. Two in five students who have asthma inhaled secondhand smoke in the past 7 days, a higher percentage than students without asthma (Figure 1).

Youth with asthma experience greater exposure to secondhand e-cigarette aerosol

Scientists are only beginning to understand the health effects of using e-cigarettes or vapes. Even less is known about the impact of secondhand exposure to e-cigarette aerosol (exhaled vapor) on nonusers, especially on vulnerable populations like youth who have asthma.

The 2017 MYTS asked students for the first time whether they had in the past 30 days breathed in secondhand aerosol from someone who was using an e-cigarette in a home, car, or indoor public place. Students who have asthma were
more likely than those who do not have asthma to report they had recently been exposed to secondhand aerosol (Figure 3).

**Figure 3. Exposure to secondhand aerosol in the past 30 days**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>No asthma</th>
<th>Asthma</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>21.7%</td>
<td>32.7%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: 2017 MYTS; difference is statistically significant; weighted percentages

### Families of youth with asthma are less likely to have rules against smoking

The primary place youth experience prolonged exposure to secondhand smoke is at home. The 2017 MYTS asked students whether smoking is always, sometimes, or never allowed in their family’s homes and vehicles. Students who do not have asthma were more likely to report smoking is never allowed in their home, car, or both (Figure 4).

**Figure 4. Smoking is never allowed in home, car, or both**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>No asthma</th>
<th>Asthma</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Home: 87.3%</td>
<td>79.5%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Car: 80.5%</td>
<td>71.4%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home and car: 75.4%</td>
<td>65.5%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: 2017 MYTS; difference is statistically significant; weighted percentages

---

**Community members can take action to protect youth.**

### Parents and Caregivers

- Protect youth who have asthma by setting rules against smoking and using e-cigarettes in homes and vehicles.
- Work with your health care provider to create and maintain an asthma action plan for your child and share it with the school health services staff.

### Health Care Professionals

Assess parents’ use of tobacco products and advise them to quit.

### Community Leaders

Local Minnesota communities are bringing cleaner, safer air to residents by working with local property managers to implement smoke-free housing policies.

Learn more: [health.mn.gov/secondhandsmoke](http://health.mn.gov/secondhandsmoke)

---

Minnesota Department of Health
PO Box 64882
St. Paul, MN 55164-0882
651-201-3535
tobacco@state.mn.us
www.health.mn.gov/tobaccodata


For questions or to request Minnesota Youth Tobacco Survey data, contact the Minnesota Center for Health Statistics.

8/5/2019

To obtain this information in a different format, call: 651-201-3535.