E-cigarettes and Vapes

E-cigarettes, vapes, vape or hookah pens, e-pipes, and other vaping products are battery-powered devices that allow users to inhale, or vape, aerosolized liquid (e-juice). Beginning August 1, 2019, Minnesota law prohibits the use of these products indoors where cigarette use is prohibited, including bars and restaurants.

E-cigarettes recently surpassed conventional cigarettes as the most commonly used tobacco product among youth, so it is critical that public health officials and the general public understand the risks of using them.

Youth e-cigarette use is a public health threat.

Among Minnesota high school students, e-cigarette use is now double conventional cigarette use. Additionally, nearly 6 percent of adults currently use e-cigarettes, compared to less than 2 percent in 2010. Young adults are more likely than other adults to use them, as nearly 13 percent of adults age 18-24 use e-cigarettes. The use of multiple tobacco products – dual use – is common: 37 percent adult e-cigarette users also use cigarettes.

E-cigarettes are not safe for youth.

Nearly all e-cigarettes contain nicotine. Nicotine is highly addictive and can harm the developing adolescent brain. Because the brain is still developing until about age 25, youth and young adult exposure to nicotine can lead to addiction and disrupt attention and learning. No amount of nicotine is safe for youth.

Over one in five of Minnesota high school students who has tried e-cigarettes has never tried any conventional tobacco products. Recent evidence suggests that, compared to youth who have never used them, youth who have tried e-cigarettes are much more likely to start smoking in the future.

E-cigarettes attract kids despite the dangers.

- E-cigarettes are available in fruit and candy flavors; flavored tobacco products appeal to youth.
- A majority of Minnesota high school students (88.4%) have seen ads for e-cigarettes in the past 30 days.
- E-cigarettes are available for purchase online.
E-cigarette aerosol contains harmful chemicals.

Similar to smoke and secondhand smoke from cigarettes and other tobacco products, aerosol from e-cigarettes (often called vapor) contains harmful and potentially harmful constituents, such as ultrafine particles, heavy metals like nickel, tin, and lead, and other cancer-causing chemicals.[1]

Exposure may increase risk of breathing problems.

Exposure to e-cigarette aerosol may be a trigger for both kids and adults with breathing problems, such as asthma, increasing their risk of severe asthma attacks. In Minnesota, kids with asthma who are exposed to e-cigarette aerosol are more likely to report symptoms than those not exposed, such as coughing, wheezing, shortness of breath, or chest pain.[11]

E-cigarettes are not proven to help people quit smoking.

E-cigarettes are not FDA-approved smoking quitting aids, and they are not proven to help people quit. Free quitting medications and counseling are available to all Minnesotans by visiting QUITPLAN® Services at www.quitplan.com or by calling 1-888-354-PLAN (7526).

More free quit smoking resources: www.health.mn.gov/quit

Visit www.health.mn.gov/ecigarettes to learn more.

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

1. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, E-Cigarette Use Among Youth and Young Adults. A Report of the Surgeon General. 2016, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Office on Smoking and Health: Atlanta, GA.