



American  
Heart  
Association.

# The 101 on e-Cigarettes

Vaping among teens continues to be a concern. In 2024, more than 1.6 million U.S. middle and high school students used e-cigarettes, a significant decline from the more than 2 million who did in 2023.



## What is an e-cigarette?

Electronic cigarettes, or e-cigarettes, are battery-powered devices that can deliver nicotine and flavorings to the user in the form of an aerosol. Most have a battery, a heating element and a place to hold the e-liquid.

Flavors that make e-cigarettes so appealing, such as cherry or vanilla, can have toxic effects themselves when inhaled, although they are generally recognized as safe when ingested in food or drinks.

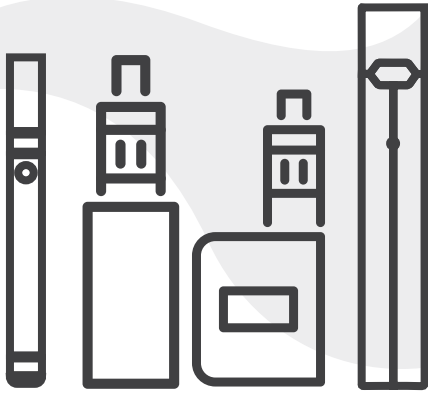
## What is vaping?

Vaping is the **act of inhaling and exhaling the aerosol, often referred to as vapor**, which is produced by an e-cigarette or similar device. The term is used because e-cigarettes do not produce tobacco smoke, but rather an aerosol, **often mistaken for water vapor, that actually consists of fine particles**. Many of these particles contain varying amounts of toxic chemicals, which have been linked to heart and respiratory diseases and cancer.

## Why are e-cigarettes unsafe for kids, teens and young adults?

- Nicotine can harm the developing adolescent brain
- E-cigarettes contain nicotine
- Nicotine addiction that occurs with e-cigarette use may lead to transition to use of combustible tobacco products
- Addiction itself, whether to nicotine or other drugs, can drive undesirable behaviors





## What do e-cigarettes look like?

E-cigarettes come in a wide variety of shapes and sizes; **mini** (often called cig-a-like), **mid-size**, **vape pens**, **vape pod systems**, **e-hookahs**, **e-cigars**, **advanced personal vaporizers or mods**; even ones shaped to look like pens and usb drives.

Tobacco companies addict our children, but the kids are the ones being punished.

**Slick marketing tactics and flavored tobacco products** have contributed to addicting our kids to nicotine once again.



This addiction is causing our kids to bring their e-cigarettes to school, where they use and influence other students to try.



Schools often punish the addicted students through suspension. **Studies show suspension increases the likelihood of negative educational outcomes.**

The American Heart Association is working with schools to help treat nicotine addiction while keeping kids in schools.

## What can parents do?

- Do not use any tobacco products
- **Talk with your kids about the dangers of smoking and the importance of avoiding any tobacco use** (conventional cigarettes or e-cigarettes)
- Educate your kids that **e-cigarettes contain nicotine, a HIGHLY addictive substance**
- **Advocate for comprehensive tobacco prevention policies** (that include e-cigarettes)

[HEART.ORG/ANTIVAPING](https://www.heart.org/antivaping)