

Preventing Prescription Opioid Misuse Among Student Athletes

Massachusetts is in the midst of an opioid crisis. Athletes in particular, due to their risk of injury and the resulting pain, may be at risk of misusing prescription opioids.

Playing a sport and being on a team can benefit middle and high school athletes in many ways — including social connections, structured afterschool time, and physical fitness — however, it can also lead to injury. In rare cases, sports injuries may result in pain that is severe or long-lasting enough to involve a prescription painkiller.

If a student athlete is injured, whenever possible, treat the injury first with rest, ice, compression, and elevation — but do seek medical care if necessary. Opioids for pain should be considered only by a physician and only when other treatment methods have not provided relief.

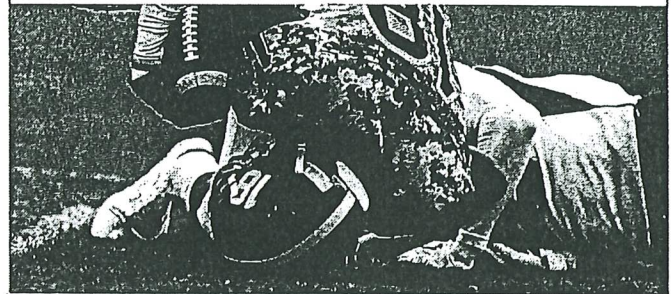
Parents, coaches, athletic directors, athletic trainers, and school nurses involved in 6th–12th grade extracurricular sports are required to complete an annual training on the risks of concussion and head injury.

Opioid-related legislation (an act related to substance use, treatment, education, and prevention) has a requirement that the Bureau of Substance Addiction Services (BSAS) provide educational materials on the dangers of opioid use and misuse to those persons participating in the annual head injury safety program. The educational materials must also be distributed in written form to all students participating in an extracurricular athletic activity prior to the commencement of their athletic seasons.

(See also mass.gov/dph/resourcesforyouthopioidmisuse.)

MOST IMPORTANT:

An injured athlete needs time to heal. Missing a game or two is better than missing an entire season — or more.



After an injury, it is important to have a communication and a return-to-play plan in place for the athlete. (Regarding head injuries, refer to your school's concussion protocols for guidance and to the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (MDPH) Sports Concussion website at mass.gov/sportsconcussion). Too often, athletes do not allow themselves the time needed to recover from their injuries and may turn to pain medication to enable their continued participation in their sport. Care must be taken to avoid the common cycle of injury, pain, and re-injury.

In addition, keep in mind the mental and social components of being on a school team and how this may impact the athlete's recovery and behavior. Losing the social connection to the team can be as damaging in some ways as the physical injury. Continue to include the student in social events, and as a spectator at team practices or games, as appropriate.

The Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association (MIAA) provides workshops and training programs for school administrators, educators, teacher-coaches, and student athletes. The MIAA Partners in Prevention is a consortium of more than 60 health, wellness, and safety organizations working together to provide resources and programming to schools and communities. The MIAA Sports Medicine Committee, which includes athletic directors, physicians, school nurses, administrators, and coaches, strives to ensure the safety of our students. The MIAA Youth Substance Misuse Prevention Collaborative is a committee of key Commonwealth stakeholders who provide prevention programming and resources. For information about MIAA initiatives and programming, call **1-508-541-7997** or visit www.miaa.net.

The MIAA is the Massachusetts Alliance Partner for the Partnership for Drug Free Kids. Learn more about the Partnership at www.drugfree.org.



For more resources on substance misuse, and to order this resource:

Massachusetts Health Promotion Clearinghouse offers free health education resources from the Massachusetts Department of Public Health: mass.gov/MAClearinghouse

Massachusetts Substance Use Helpline provides free and anonymous information and referrals for alcohol and other substance use problems: HelplineMA.org | Toll-free: 1-800-327-5050 | TTY: Use MassRelay at 711 or 1-800-720-3480

Massachusetts Department of Public Health Bureau of Substance Addiction Services oversees treatment for substance use disorders in the Commonwealth: mass.gov/dph/bsas

National Institute for Drug Abuse (part of the National Institutes of Health) is charged with advancing the science of addiction, and provides the latest research and resources: www.drugabuse.gov

Injury Management: A Key Component of Prescription Opioid Misuse Prevention



NOTE: Painkillers are generally not prescribed for injuries that involve concussions, so those injuries are not addressed here. For more information on preventing and treating concussions, please see the **Massachusetts Executive Office of Health and Human Services website:** mass.gov/sportsconcussion

If a student athlete is injured:

- ✓ Use ice to reduce soreness and inflammation. If symptoms continue, contact a physician, especially if the athlete has trouble with full joint movement.
- ✓ Check with a health care provider to see if over-the-counter nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory medications are needed. As with all medications, always follow the directions on the label and any instructions from a health care provider.
- ✓ Opioids for pain should be considered only if recommended by a physician and only when other approaches have not provided relief.
- ✓ Fractures, sprains, and broken bones need plenty of rest to heal properly. The athlete should see an orthopedic specialist, who can evaluate and manage the healing process.
- ✓ The athlete's parents or guardians and coach should discuss together how the injury will impact the student's ability to play. If an injury will sideline the athlete, the parents or guardians and coach should consider creating a return-to-play plan together.



For more information on preventing sports injuries in youth:

The Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association provides safety, wellness, and prevention resources and information for student athletes, teacher-coaches, athletic directors, and school personnel: www.miaa.net

The Micheli Center for Sports Injury Prevention offers sport-specific injury prevention information: www.themichelicenter.com

The Division of Injury Prevention, Massachusetts Department of Public Health (MDPH) offers resources on reducing injuries among youth at school, at home and in the community: mass.gov/dph/injury

MDPH Sports Concussion Prevention and Management Program provides information on a number of important topics, including regulations, training, required forms for schools and clinicians, and model policies for schools: mass.gov/sportsconcussion

CDC Child Injury Prevention offers many resources on injury prevention: www.cdc.gov/safechild/nap

Boston Children's Hospital, Sports Medicine Division provides comprehensive multidisciplinary care to athletes of all ages and abilities, from professional athletes to eager novices: www.childrenshospital.org/centers-and-services/centers/orthopaedic-center

Sports Medicine Center, Mass General Hospital provides interdisciplinary care for athletes: www.massgeneral.org/orthopaedics/sports-medicine

What to Know About Prescription Opioids

Which medications are prescription opioids?

- ✓ Prescription opioids are narcotic pain medications that are prescribed for people with moderate to severe pain. They include Vicodin, OxyContin, Oxycodone, Percocet, Fentanyl, Opana, and codeine.

What should parents or guardians do if prescription pain medication is recommended for the youth?

- ✓ Talk openly with the health care provider about the need for prescription pain medicine. Make sure to ask about possible risks and side effects, alternative options that may exist, precautions, and proper use of the medication.
- ✓ If anyone in the family has had problems with prescription drugs, alcohol, or any other drugs, let the doctor know.
- ✓ Be sure that the athlete takes the medication only as prescribed and uses only the minimal amount for the shortest period needed for effective relief.
- ✓ Keep control of the medication bottle, and supervise the youth when he or she is taking the medication. Do not allow the youth to self-administer. Count the pills or keep track of the amount of medicine in the bottle on a regular basis.
- ✓ Keep the medication at home, if possible. If the youth needs to take medication during the school day, the school (by law) must approve its use. Talk with school staff about proper supervision, and follow the necessary protocols.

- ✓ Remind the youth that prescription medication is only good for the person it is prescribed for and that it could seriously hurt others.
- ✓ Be sure that the youth takes the medication no longer than necessary.

How should prescription medications be stored?

- ✓ Don't keep the prescription medicine in the medicine cabinet. It is best to keep all medicine in a locked cabinet or box that the youth cannot access.
- ✓ Ask anyone that children and teens may visit to lock up their medicine or keep them in a safe place.
- ✓ Talk to the parents of your teenager's friends, and encourage them to secure their prescriptions.

HOW TO DISPOSE OF UNUSED/EXPIRED MEDICINE*

Medicine drop-off or take-back options are the best way to safely dispose of most types of unneeded medicines. Visit www.mass.gov/DrugDropbox or <http://takebackday.dea.gov> to find a location in your town or city. You can also call the DEA Office of Diversion Control's Registration Call Center at 1-800-882-9539 to find an authorized collector in your community.

A small number of medicines have specific directions to flush them down the toilet when they are no longer needed and if a take-back option is not readily available.

* Advice from the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA)

List of medicines recommended for disposal by flushing when take-back options are not readily available

There are some medicines that, when not disposed of properly, can pose significant risks. For example, patients using fentanyl patches should immediately flush their used or unneeded patches down the toilet. When

powerful medicines such as these patches are disposed down the toilet, you help to keep others safe by ensuring these medicines are not misused or accidentally ingested or touched. For those using an online version, brand names in the right hand column are links that direct you to medicine information for consumers that may include specific disposal instructions.*

Active Ingredient	Found in Brand Names
Benzhydrocodone/ Acetaminophen	Apadaz
Buprenorphine	Belbuca, Bunavail, Butrans, Suboxone, Subutex, Zubsolv
Fentanyl	Abstral, Actiq, Duragesic, Fentora, Onsolis
Diazepam	Diastat/ Diastat AcuDiál rectal gel
Hydrocodone	Anexsia, Hysingla ER, Lortab, Norco, Reprexain, Vicodin, Vicoprofen, Zohydro ER
Hydromorphone	Dilaudid, Exalgo
Meperidine	Demerol
Methadone	Dolophine, Methadose
Methylphenidate	Daytrana transdermal patch system
Morphine	Arymo ER, Embeda, Kadian, Morphabond ER, MS Contin, Avinza
Oxycodone	Combunox, Oxaydo (formerly Oxecta), OxyContin, Percocet, Percodan, Roxicet, Roxicodone, Targiniq ER, Xartemis XR, Xtampza ER, Roxybond
Oxymorphone	Opana, Opana ER
Tapentadol	Nucynta, Nucynta ER
Sodium Oxybate	Xyrem oral solution

* Advice from the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA)

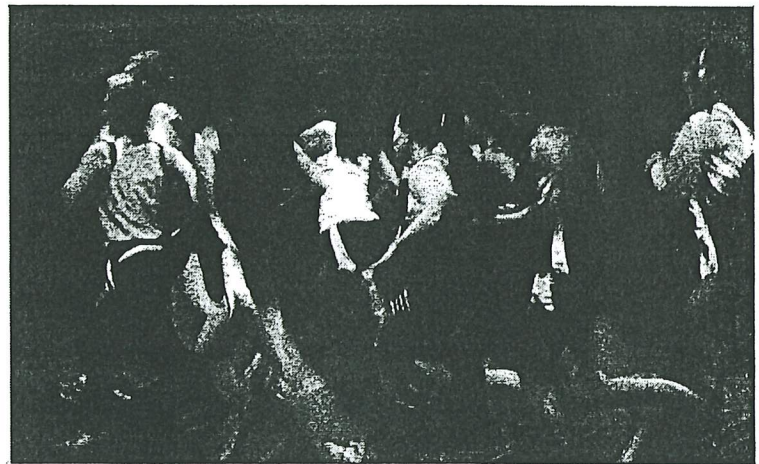
The FDA believes that the known risk of harm, including death, to humans from accidental exposure to the medicines listed above, especially potent opioid medicines, far outweighs any potential risk to humans or the environment from flushing these medicines. The FDA will continue to conduct risk assessments as a part of larger activities related to the safe use of medicines. For disposal information, specific to any medication you are taking please visit [Drugs@FDA](https://www.fda.gov/Drugs@FDA). Once there, type in the medication name and click on search. Then click on the label section for that specific medication. Select the most recent label and search for the term “disposal.”



Disposal in the household trash

If there are no take-back programs or DEA-registered collectors in your area, and there are no specific disposal instructions in the product package insert, such as flushing described above, you can also follow these simple steps:

- ✓ Mix medicines (do not crush tablets or capsules) with an unpalatable substance such as dirt, cat litter, or used coffee grounds;
- ✓ Place the mixture in a container such as a sealed plastic bag;
- ✓ Delete all personal information on the prescription label of empty pill bottles or medicine packaging, then dispose of the container and the bag in your household trash.



For additional information, see Medication Disposal: Questions and Answers (www.fda.gov/drugs/safe-disposal-medicines/disposal-unused-medicines-what-you-should-know#qa) from the FDA or call 1-855-543-3784.

Guidance on Communications After a Non-Concussion Sports Injury

Teens who participate in extracurricular activities have a positive alternative to using drugs and alcohol. When student athletes are sidelined with an injury, their time may be less structured, they may need some form of pain management, and they may lose their connections to a supportive community. As a result, they may turn to misusing substances like drugs and alcohol.

Coaches and parents or guardians should remember that they each have the same goal: ensuring the best possible outcome for the youth. When a student athlete is injured, coaches and parents or guardians should work together to share information about the problem and treatment plan, and craft the plan for returning to play.



- ✓ Adolescence is a time when students are encouraged to advocate for themselves and become more independent. **However, when it comes to health and injury, it is essential that a parent or guardian becomes involved.**
- ✓ **Information** should be shared among all those involved in the care and management of a sports injury. This may include the parent or guardian, physician, school nurse, athletic trainer, physical therapist, coach, and/or athletic director. Speak to the youth about what they want, and find ways for them to stay involved with the team.
- ✓ **Pay attention to the social and emotional impact** of a sports injury. Being sidelined may lead to general depression and a loss of structured activity, connection to friends, and identity as an athlete. Speak

to your child about what they want, and find ways for them to stay involved with the team.

- ✓ **Return-to-play decisions** should have the proper healing of the injured athlete as the primary objective. Some students may be eager to return to the game and will try to mask their discomfort. To avoid returning to play too early, which can lead to improper healing, have a medical professional and/or the school's athletic trainer make the final decision regarding the athlete's return-to-play plan.

The Massachusetts Department of Public Health and the Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association support your efforts to keep youth healthy and strong.

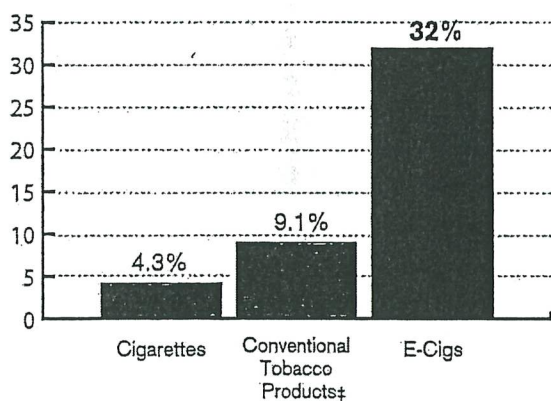
The New Look of

NICOTINE ADDICTION

Did you know?

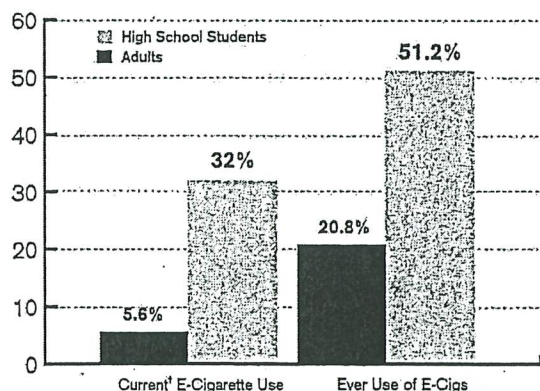
In 2019, 32% of Massachusetts high school students reported currently using e-cigarettes, and over half tried them at least once. More high school students used e-cigarettes than all other tobacco products combined, and they used them at a significantly higher rate than adults.*

Current[†] Use of Tobacco Products by Massachusetts High School Students, 2019



Source: 2019 MA YHS*

E-Cigarette Use Among Massachusetts High School Students ('19) and Adults ('18)



Source: 2019 MA YHS* and 2018 BRFSS

[†] Use in the past 30 days.

[‡] Conventional tobacco is defined as cigarettes, cigars (including little cigars and cigarillos), and smokeless tobacco (such as chewing tobacco, snuff, or dip).

* The 2019 MA Youth Health Survey (YHS) data are provisional and subject to revision until they have been thoroughly reviewed and received final approval.

¹ Cullen KA, Gentzke AS, Sawdey MD. E-cigarette Use among Youth in the United States, 2019. JAMA. 2019; 322(21):2095-2103.

Vapes and e-cigarettes contain nicotine and other harmful chemicals.



Massachusetts has taken action to reduce the influence of the tobacco and vaping industries:

Sweet: Vapes and e-cigarettes come in thousands of different flavors. The majority of youth who use e-cigarettes use products that are flavored.¹

In Massachusetts: The sale of flavored e-cigarettes is now restricted to adult-only smoking bars. As of June 2020, ALL flavored tobacco products, including menthol, are restricted to smoking bars for onsite consumption only.

Cheap: Products are priced to encourage impulse buys by young people.

In Massachusetts: As of June 2020, e-cigarettes and other electronic nicotine delivery systems will be taxed, bringing them in line with the cost of cigarettes and other tobacco products and making them less attractive for impulse buys.

Easy to Get: These products are at gas stations, corner stores, mini-marts, and many more types of stores.

In Massachusetts: The new tobacco law makes e-cigarettes and all other flavored tobacco products harder to get. But this doesn't mean that youth will stop seeing tobacco products or advertisements in your community.

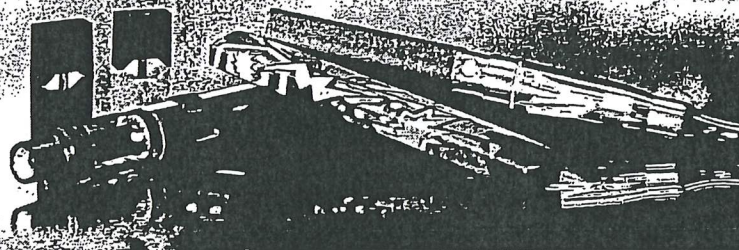
What you can do:

- **Talk with your kids**—make sure they know e-cigarettes and other tobacco products are harmful.
- **Know the facts**—Nicotine can damage a teen's developing brain and lead to addiction. The earlier they start, the harder it is to quit.
- **Look out**—the tobacco industry keeps developing new products to get youth hooked.

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Get the facts at GetOutraged.org

The New Look of **NICOTINE ADDICTION**



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQ) ABOUT VAPING

What is vaping?

Vaping is the act of inhaling and exhaling the aerosol (often called vapor) produced by an e-cigarette or similar battery-powered device.

What is an e-cigarette?

E-cigarettes are battery-powered vaporizers that simulate the action and sensation of smoking.

What are other names for e-cigarettes?

They are also known as e-cigs, vape pens, e-hookahs, e-pipes, tanks, mods, vapes, electronic nicotine delivery systems, or ENDS, and more. Some people refer to vaping devices by their brand name such as JUUL, BO, Blu, and others.

What types of e-cigarettes are there?

E-cigarettes come in many different sizes, types, and colors.

Some e-cigarettes are made to look like regular cigarettes, cigars, or pipes. Some resemble pens, small electronic devices such as USB sticks, and other everyday items. The products that are designed to resemble small electronic devices are often compact and allow for discreet carrying and use—at home, in school hallways and bathrooms, and even in classrooms.

What is in e-cigarettes? My child says it's simply flavored water. What's so bad about it?

E-cigarettes contain pre-filled pods or e-liquids/e-juices the user adds to the device. E-liquids generally consist of propylene glycol, glycerin, water, nicotine, and flavorings. Many of these pods and e-liquids come in fruit and candy flavors that appeal to youth.

E-cigarettes produce an aerosol, commonly called vapor, which users inhale from the device and exhale. This aerosol can contain harmful and potentially harmful substances, including:

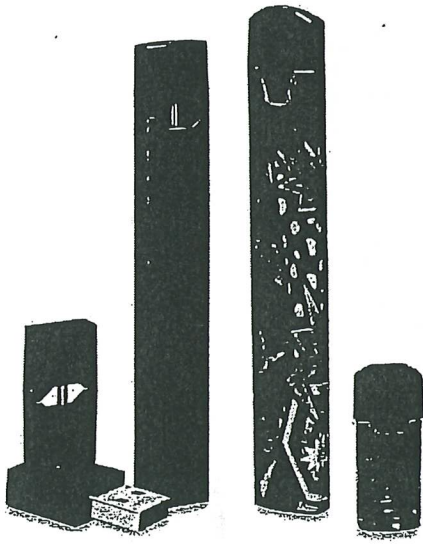
- Nicotine
- Ultrafine particles that can be inhaled deep into the lungs
- Flavoring such as diacetyl, a chemical linked to a serious lung disease
- Volatile organic compounds
- Cancer-causing chemicals
- Heavy metals such as nickel, tin, and lead



Massachusetts
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Nicotine and addiction

E-cigarettes contain nicotine. Nicotine is a highly addictive substance.

According to the Surgeon General, because the brain isn't fully developed until the mid 20s, youth and young adults are uniquely at risk for long-term, long-lasting effects of exposing their developing brains to nicotine.

These risks include nicotine addiction, mood disorders, and permanent lowering of impulse control. Nicotine also changes the way synapses are formed, which can harm the parts of the brain that control attention and learning.

Teens can get addicted more easily than adults. The nicotine in e-cigarettes and other tobacco products can also prime the adolescent brain for addiction to other drugs such as cocaine.

E-cigarette use among youth and young adults is strongly linked to the use of other tobacco products, such as regular cigarettes, cigars, hookah, and smokeless tobacco.

Are e-cigarettes federally regulated?

The Food and Drug Administration's (FDA) Center for Tobacco Products has the authority to regulate the manufacturing, importing, packaging, labeling, advertising, promotion, sale, and distribution of electronic nicotine delivery systems. The FDA does not have authority to regulate vaping accessories.

Federal law now prohibits the sale of e-cigarettes to anyone under the age of 21.

Are e-cigarettes safe?

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), ***e-cigarettes are not safe for youth, young adults, pregnant women, or adults who do not currently use tobacco products.*** E-cigarettes have not been approved by the FDA as a smoking cessation device and additional research is needed to help understand long-term health effects of e-cigarette use.

As of the publication of this document, the CDC and the FDA are investigating the cause of e-cigarette or vaping product use associated lung injury (EVALI). For updated information on the lung injury associated with vaping, visit the CDC's website on the topic at <http://bit.ly/2s5Hiz0>. There can be serious lung issues due to e-cigarette use that are not officially diagnosed as EVALI.

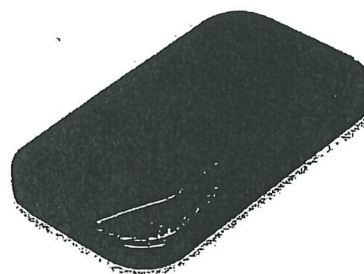
For other known dangers associated with e-cigarette use, see the other sections in this document.

Other dangers

In addition to nicotine, e-cigarettes contain harmful and potentially harmful chemicals such as ultrafine particles that can be inhaled deep into the lungs; flavoring such as diacetyl, a chemical linked to a serious lung disease; volatile organic compounds such as benzene, which is found in car exhaust; and heavy metals, such as nickel, tin, and lead.

Due to nicotine content, e-liquids are dangerous to small children and pets. The Massachusetts Attorney General requires that nicotine liquid and gel be sold in appropriate child-resistant packaging.

In addition to chemical contents, defective e-cigarette batteries have caused fires and explosions, some of which have resulted in serious injuries.



E-cigarettes and other vaping devices can be used to vape other substances, such as marijuana.

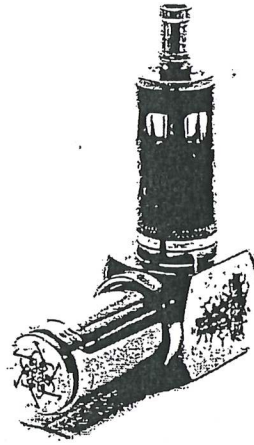
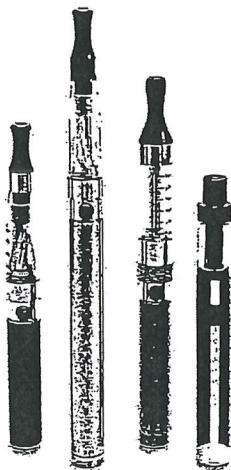
Is being around secondhand vape safe?

No. According to the Surgeon General, the aerosol from e-cigarettes is not harmless. It can contain harmful and potentially harmful chemicals, including nicotine; ultrafine particles that can be inhaled deep into the lungs; flavoring such as diacetyl, a chemical linked to a serious lung disease; volatile organic compounds such as benzene, which is found in car exhaust; and heavy metals, such as nickel, tin, and lead.

Scientists are still working to more fully understand the health effects and harmful doses of e-cigarette contents when they are heated and turned into an aerosol, both for users who inhale from a device and for those who are exposed to the aerosol secondhand.

Can e-cigarettes be used to vape other substances?

Yes. E-cigarettes and other vaping devices can be used to vape other substances, such as marijuana. Open systems allow the user to add the e-juice, which can be a substance other than nicotine. Closed systems are generally not refillable because they use pre-filled pods. However, they can also be altered to vape substances other than nicotine.



Where are e-cigarettes sold and how are youth getting them?

Until recently, e-cigarettes were sold in many places including convenience stores, corner stores, gas stations, vape shops, and online. As of November 27, 2019, Massachusetts implemented a new law that restricts where e-cigarettes can be sold. Currently, the sale of all flavored e-cigarettes in Massachusetts is restricted to adult-only (age 21+) smoking bars. The sale of unflavored e-cigarettes with a nicotine content over 35 mg/mL is restricted to adult-only tobacco retail stores or smoking bars. Unflavored e-cigarettes with a nicotine content of 35 mg/mL or less can still be sold in convenience stores, gas stations, liquor stores and other similar businesses, as well as online.

Just like other tobacco and nicotine products, youth may get e-cigarettes from friends who vape or from local or online stores that do not abide by Massachusetts' restrictions on sales. If you wish to report one of these sales violations, call 1-800-992-1895 or contact your local Board of Health.

What can I do to prevent my child from vaping?

Simply talking with your child about these products can help protect them. Let them know that you care about them and that vaping is not safe. Visit GetOutraged.org to learn how to start the conversation.

How can I tell if my child is vaping?

Many types of e-cigarettes are made to resemble everyday items and can easily fit in a pocket or the palm of a hand. In addition, they come in fruit and candy flavors (although these flavors are now restricted in MA). For these reasons, it may be hard to tell if your child is vaping—you may not recognize a vaping device or an e-liquid scent.

Here are subtle signs your child might be vaping:

Unexplained Sweet Scent—If you notice a sweet scent that is unexplainable, it might be a flavored e-juice for a vaping device.

Unfamiliar Products—If you come across unusual looking items such as unusual pens or USB drives or an unfamiliar battery or battery charging device, they could be associated with vaping.

The best way to know is to educate yourself about the products and to talk with your kids.

Nicotine is an addictive substance that impacts the brain and body. Some young people may not realize they are addicted to nicotine. If they experience one or more of the following, they likely are hooked:

- Having strong cravings to vape/use tobacco
- Feeling nervous or anxious when they can't vape/use tobacco
- Vaping in places they aren't supposed to (going out of their way to vape/use tobacco)
- Having trouble concentrating
- Feeling like they need to vape/use tobacco to feel better
- Feeling angry, irritable or restless when they haven't vaped/used tobacco in a while

If my child is vaping, how can I help them quit?

Quitting vapes or other tobacco products can be hard. Here are some ways to help young people get the support they need:

- **This is Quitting** powered by **truth**[®] is a free and confidential texting program for young people who vape. Young people can text "VapeFreeMass" to 88709 to get started.
- **My Life, My Quit**™ has youth coach specialists trained to help young people by phone or text. Young people can call or text "Start My Quit" to 855-891-9989 for free and confidential help or visit mylifemyquit.com to sign up online.
- **Smokefree Teen** (teen.smokefree.gov) is part of the National Cancer Institute's (NCI) **Smokefree.gov** Initiative. Services offered include text messaging and a **quitSTART** app that provides strategies for tackling cravings, bad moods, and other situations.
- Young people can ask for help from their school nurse or counselor, athletic coach, doctor, parent, or other trusted adult.
- For more information, young people can visit mass.gov/vaping.

For more information on how to help your child quit vaping or other tobacco products, visit GetOutraged.org or talk to your child's health care provider.

What if I use tobacco or have in the past?

Be honest and talk with your child about your choices and how hard it is/was to quit.

If you need help quitting tobacco, it's never too late to keep trying.

Call 1-800-QUIT-NOW or visit makesmokinghistory.org for information and support.

Information is taken from *E-Cigarette Use Among Youth and Young Adults: A Report of the Surgeon General*, 2016, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (website on Electronic Cigarettes https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/basic_information/e-cigarettes/index.htm Accessed 5/22/18)

Other sources include:

McRobbie, Hayden; Bullen, Chris; Hartmann-Boyce, Jamie; Hajek, Peter (2014). "Electronic cigarettes for smoking cessation and reduction". *The Cochrane Library*. 12: CD010216. doi:10.1002/14651858.CD010216.pub2. PMID 25515689.

Is My Child Vaping? (2018, February 19). Retrieved from <https://raisingteens.today.com/is-my-child-vaping-heres-9-signs-to-watch-for/>. Accessed 5/18/18



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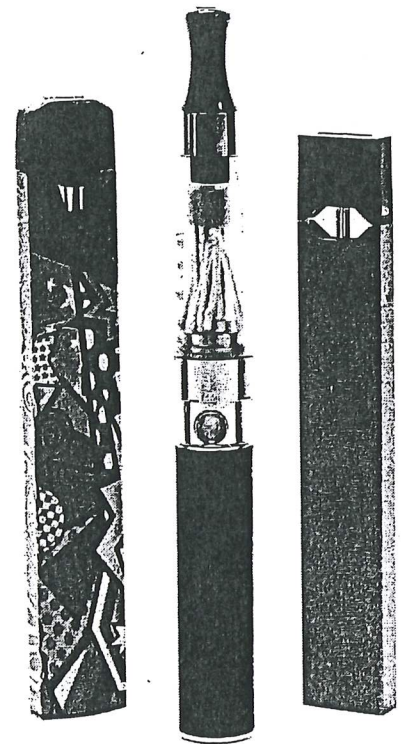
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Tips for talking with your kids about

VAPING

Know the facts. Learn about e-cigarettes and young people before you start the conversation with your child.

- E-cigarettes are known by many different names. They are sometimes called e-cigs, e-hookahs, mods, vape pens, vapes, tank systems, and electronic nicotine delivery systems.
- Most vaping devices contain and deliver nicotine. Nicotine can harm a teenager's developing brain and lead to addiction.
- Simply talking with your teen about these products can help protect them.



Be patient and ready to listen.

Your goal is to have a conversation, not to deliver a lecture. So avoid criticism and encourage an open dialogue.

There is no "perfect time" to talk.

Driving in the car together or waiting at an appointment is often the best time. You can start by mentioning a news story, a TV show, or something that you heard about vaping. Or ask your child what he or she thinks about a situation you witness together such as seeing someone use an e-cigarette, passing a vape shop when you are out, or seeing an e-cigarette advertisement.

There is no "perfect talk."

Consider your talks with your child about vaping as a learning opportunity for both of you, and perhaps just the beginning of an ongoing dialogue. You may have some facts about vaping at hand, but concede that you don't know all the answers. It will go a long way to keep your kids from going on the defensive.

Ask what your child thinks.

Show some genuine curiosity. Ask your child, "What's your take on vaping?" or "Do you know kids who use e-cigarettes?"

Be open and honest.

Be truthful about what you know about the dangers of vaping, and what you don't. You can honestly say, though, "Vaping isn't harmless. I hope you can steer clear of it."



You can't always control everything your children do when they're not with you. Talking with your kids about vaping will let them know that you're concerned about their health.

Excerpted from *Talk with Your Teen About E-cigarettes: A Tip Sheet for Parents* from *E-Cigarette Use Among Youth and Young Adults: A Report of the Surgeon General* and other content taken from *How to Talk to Your Kids about Vaping*; New York Times, February 2, 2018.



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