



# WHAT PARENTS NEED TO KNOW

**Avera** 

## WHAT ARE E-CIGARETTES?

Electronic cigarettes (e-cigarettes) are battery-powered devices that deliver nicotine, flavorings and other ingredients to the user. Using e-cigarettes is sometimes called “vaping.” E-cigarettes do not create harmless “water vapor” – they create an aerosol that can contain harmful chemicals.

## WHAT ARE THE RISKS FOR TEENS?

Most e-cigarettes contain nicotine, which is highly addictive. Nicotine exposure during adolescence can:

- Harm brain development, which continues until about age 25.
- Impact learning, memory and attention.
- Increase risk for future addiction to other drugs.

Young people who use e-cigarettes may be more likely to go on to use regular cigarettes. Many e-cigarettes come in kid-friendly flavors – including fruit, mint and vanilla – which make e-cigarettes more appealing to young people.

E-cigarette aerosol is not harmless. It can contain harmful substances, including:

- Nicotine
- Cancer-causing chemicals
- Volatile organic compounds
- Ultrafine particles
- Flavorings that have been linked to lung disease
- Heavy metals such as nickel, tin and lead

## WHAT DO E-CIGARETTES LOOK LIKE?

- E-cigarettes come in many shapes and sizes. Some look like regular cigarettes, cigars or pipes. Larger e-cigarettes such as tank systems – or “mods” – do not look like other tobacco products.
- Some e-cigarettes look like other items commonly used by youth, such as pens and other everyday items. New e-cigarettes shaped like USB flash drives are popular among youth, including Juul and the PAX Era, which looks like Juul and delivers marijuana.



## WHAT CAN YOU DO AS A PARENT OR CAREGIVER?

- Talk to your child or teen about why e-cigarettes are harmful for them. It’s never too late.
- Set a good example by living tobacco-free.
- If you’re not sure where to begin, ask your health care provider to talk to your child about the risks of e-cigarettes.



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