

Vaping and Youth: Factsheet for Parents

The use of vapour products has been on the rise with youth. “Vaping” is the act of inhaling and exhaling an aerosol, often called vapour, which is produced by heating a liquid with a battery-powered device known as a vape, electronic-cigarette or vapour product. The liquid is often referred to as e-juice, and comes in a variety of flavours which youth may find appealing. It can be difficult for parents to know if their child is vaping. Some liquids are odourless and devices can mimic the look of common objects such as USB flash drives, pens and flashlights. Parents - become educated on the myths and facts of adolescent vaping and share this information with your children.

MYTHS AND FACTS

MYTH The vapour exhaled from a vaping device is just water.

Vapour products do not produce smoke or steam, but rather an aerosol consisting of fine particles, containing varying amounts of propylene glycol, glycerin, flavourings and other chemicals. Some of these have been linked to cancer, respiratory and heart disease.

MYTH E-juice does not contain nicotine.

People who use vapour products may be reassured by “nicotine-free” labels on the liquids. Tests performed by Health Canada found that about half of e-juices that were labelled “nicotine-free” actually contained nicotine.

MYTH Vapour products are harmless.

Vapour products are marketed as a harmless alternative to smoking. However, Health Canada states that there are health risks linked to chemicals found in vapour products and long term effects of vaping are still unknown. Even small amounts of e-juice can be poisonous to a young child if ingested and can be toxic if spilled on the skin.



FACT It is illegal to purchase vapour products for minors.

Vapour devices and liquids are readily available to buy on the internet or at local retailers. It is AGAINST THE LAW to sell, give or provide any vapour products to someone under the age of 19. If you suspect someone is providing vapour products to minors, please contact the Integrated Tobacco Team at tobacco@interiorhealth.ca.

FACT More youth aged 15-19 have tried vaping than smoking tobacco.

Smoking rates have steadily declined in Canada and BC, but vaping among youth is on the rise. About one in four Canadian youth aged 15 to 19 years report having tried an electronic cigarette.

FACT Vapour devices can be used to inhale illicit substances.

Newer generations of vapour devices can be altered for use with cannabis or its components (THC, hash oil) or other substances.

FACT Youth vaping may lead to tobacco use.

Nicotine is a highly addictive substance. Youth are more vulnerable to addiction because their brains are still developing. There are concerns that adolescent vapour product users may begin smoking tobacco products. A new study by the University of Waterloo found that teenagers who vape have double the risk of smoking tobacco cigarettes.

WHAT CAN PARENTS DO?

- Start a conversation. Talk with your children and teens about the risks of vaping. Check out <https://e-cigarettes.surgeongeneral.gov/takeaction.html> for tips.
- Educate yourself about vapour products. See the “Find out More” section below.
- Be a positive role model. Don’t smoke or vape around children.
- Don’t buy or give vapour or tobacco products to minors.
- Keep vapour products, including their nicotine refills and empty cartridges, out of the reach of children and pets. Dispose of batteries in a safe and environmentally sound manner.

FIND OUT MORE!

- [Heart and Stroke Foundation Position Statement on E-cigarettes](#)
- [National Centre on Addiction and Substance Use](#)
- Ontario Tobacco Research Unit video [To Vape or Not To Vape?](#)
- Interior Health [Vapour Products In and On School Property](#)
- Interior Health [Tobacco Reduction Page](#) or [Quit Now](#) for information on proven quit aids and support.

