

The Truth about Electronic Cigarettes/Vaping



What are electronic cigarettes?

- Electronic cigarettes (e-cigarettes) are battery-operated products designed to turn nicotine and other chemicals into vapor.
- The vapor comes from heating a liquid (“juice”) which is inhaled.
- E-cigarettes are available in different flavors (such as chocolate, strawberry, and mint) which may appeal to young people.
- E-cigarettes are made to look like cigarettes, cigars, pipes, and pens.
Here are some examples:



What can parents do?

- As of January 1, 2016, the sale of e-cigarettes in Oregon to individuals under the age of 18 years is illegal under state law.
- E-cigarette use is on the rise. In Oregon, e-cigarette use in high school students increased by 150% from 2011 to 2013 from 1.8% to 5.2%.
- Talk to your children and adolescents early about the health risks of e-cigarettes just as you do with regular cigarettes, drugs, and alcohol. Research has shown that individuals who do not use tobacco before 26 years are likely to never start.
- Talk to your children about your expectations, such as how you strongly disapprove their use of tobacco. This can lessen a teen’s risk of smoking or vaping.
- Talk to your children about e-cigarette ads they see on TV, the internet, and in stores. Use this as a chance to talk to your children about the health effects of smoking or vaping.
- Talk to your health provider! We are more than happy to answer questions and discuss any of your concerns.

What are the health effects of using electronic cigarettes?

- Preliminary testing has shown that e-cigarettes have chemicals known to cause cancer and birth defects from first and second-hand smoking.
- Some brands claim they do not contain nicotine, but when tested, they have been found to contain some levels of nicotine.
- Nicotine is highly addictive. It is the chemical that makes it hard to quit smoking. Using e-cigarettes may lead kids to try other tobacco products.
- The liquid substance or “juice” of e-cigarettes is poisonous if swallowed. Between 2014 and 2015, the Oregon Poison Control Center received a 32% increase in phone calls about e-cigarette poisonings, which can lead to heart palpitations, seizures and even death.
- Currently, e-cigarettes are not regulated by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) so the safety of the devices is not known.
- E-cigarettes have **not** been approved by the FDA as a safe and approved tool to quit smoking.