

# What Parents and Teenager Need to Know about E-cigarettes

Electronic Nicotine Delivery Systems (ENDS), also known as e-cigs, e-cigarettes, or vape pens, produce an aerosolized mixture (“vapor”) of nicotine and flavored liquid that is inhaled by its user.

They are wildly popular. Their use has increased significantly over the last five years and they are now the most commonly used tobacco products among American youth (1).

## 5 Facts About Electronic Nicotine Delivery Systems (ENDS)

There are many important facts you should know about ENDS.

### #1 – ENDS are difficult to identify.

Many of these products can be difficult to identify. Devices often look similar to a pen, memory stick, or even a key fob.

### #2 – ENDS are addictive.

ENDS use a liquid solution or “E-juice” that are sold in flavors like fruit, candy, coffee, and chocolate. Most e-juices have the addictive ingredient nicotine. They also contain chemicals such as anti-freeze or cancer causing ingredients like nitrosamines (3)

### #3 – ENDS can contaminate & poison.

E-liquid can contaminate skin as well, leading to nicotine poisoning. Symptoms of nicotine poisoning include vomiting, sweating, dizziness, increased heart rate, lethargy, and seizures.

### #4 – ENDS use is on the rise.

In 2014 there were over 3,700 cases of significant exposures to e-cigarettes and nicotine liquid. This trend is expected to increase.

### #5 – Using ENDS can lead to other Tobacco Use.

Children who vape just once are more likely to try other types of tobacco.



## Be Honest with Kids About e-Cigarette Use

It's important to be honest with teens and counsel them about the harms of e-cigarette use. Discuss the effects that e-cigarettes can have on the brain and that nicotine addiction happens quickly. Teenagers need to understand e-cigarettes contain cancer causing chemicals and nicotine; they are not "just water vapor."

The increasing use of e-cigarette is alarming. As a provider as well as a parent, I feel we need to educate our teenagers and ourselves in order to reverse this trend.

### **Resources:**

1. *Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Tobacco Use Among Middle and High School Students—United States, 2011–2016. Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report, 2017;66(23):597-603. Accessed July 28, 2017*
2. *US Department of Health and Human Services (2016). E-Cigarette Use Among Youth and Young Adults: A Report of the Surgeon General. Atlanta, GA. US Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Office on Smoking and Health*
3. *American Academy of Pediatrics Section on Tobacco Control. Policy statement: Electronic Nicotine Delivery Systems. Pediatrics. 2015; 136(5):1018–1026.*

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### **About Andrew Jakubowicz, MD**

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