



News Articles, Adolescent Health/Medicine, Smoking

Study: Youth tobacco use decreasing; e-cigarettes most popular

by Melissa Jenco, News Content Editor

Fewer teens are using tobacco, but 20% of high school students still do, according to a new study.

"Despite promising declines in tobacco use, far too many young people continue to use tobacco products, including e-cigarettes," Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Director Robert R. Redfield, M.D., said in a news release. "Comprehensive, sustained strategies can help prevent and reduce tobacco use and protect our nation's youth from this preventable health risk."

The CDC and Food and Drug Administration studied trends using data from National Youth Tobacco Surveys and published the results today in the CDC's *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report*.

In 2017, about 20% of high school students (2.95 million) reported current use of tobacco, down from 24% (3.69 million) in 2011, according to the study. About 47% of users said they used multiple products.

Among middle school students, nearly 6% (0.67 million) were current tobacco users in 2017, down from 7.5% (0.87 million) in 2011. Roughly 41% of users reported multiple product use.

E-cigarettes were the most popular tobacco product among both age groups, a trend that started in 2014. Some teens believe e-cigarettes are safe, especially as they come in flavors like cotton candy and bubble gum. However, the U.S. **surgeon general has concluded** e-cigarettes are addictive and harmful to developing brains, and the **National Academies of Science, Engineering and Medicine** found users are at increased risk for switching to traditional cigarettes. Studies also have found the chemical compounds in e-cigarettes can be toxic.

Researchers called for additional efforts to combat all forms of tobacco use, including raising the purchase age to 21 years, implementing new advertising restrictions, raising prices and continuing to education youths about the dangers.

Resources

- [The surgeon general's interactive website about e-cigarettes geared toward parents and others who work with youths](#)
- [AAP Julius B. Richmond Center for Excellence website](#)
- [AAP policy "Clinical Practice Policy to Protect Children From Tobacco, Nicotine, and Tobacco Smoke"](#)
- [AAP policy "Electronic Nicotine Delivery Systems"](#)
- [Information for parents from HealthyChildren.org about e-cigarettes](#)
- [Pediatrics e-cigarette article collection](#)