



## Pediatricians urged to ask youth about use of all tobacco products

May 1, 2024

from the Food and Drug Administration

Article type: [FDA Update](#)

Topics: [Public Health](#), [Smoking](#)



The most recent [National Youth Tobacco Survey](#) showed more than 2.8 million U.S. middle school and high school students reported current use of tobacco products, and almost 1 million reported current use of multiple tobacco products (<https://bit.ly/3H1plCM>).

While use of tobacco products among high school students dropped between 2022 and 2023, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) remains concerned about youth use of any tobacco product.

For the 10th consecutive year, e-cigarettes remained the most commonly used product, with 7.7% of U.S. youth reporting current use. Of youth who used e-cigarettes, almost nine in 10 used flavored e-cigarettes, including fruit and candy flavors.

Youth also reported using nonconventional tobacco products, including hookah, nicotine pouches and other oral tobacco products (e.g., lozenges, chewable tobacco and dissolvable products). These products may appeal to youth because of their availability in flavors or resemblance to popular candies.



Hookah devices are used commonly in social settings with multiple people. The devices pass air heated electrically or by charcoal through a tobacco mixture, which typically contains sweetener and flavoring, and then a water-filled chamber.

Nicotine pouches are small, white viscose fiber pouches that can be used without needing to spit. The pouches typically are placed between the gum and upper lip where the nicotine is absorbed into the body.

Dissolvable tobacco products are sold as lozenges, oral strips or sticks, and some may look like hard candy.

“Medical professionals, especially pediatricians, play an important role in discussing the dangers of tobacco product use with youth,” said Brian King, director of the FDA’s Center for Tobacco Products. “As the tobacco product landscape continues to evolve, it’s important for medical professionals to keep pace by screening for the use of these products and counseling youth about their risks.”

Youth use of tobacco products in any form is unsafe. These products can contain nicotine, which is highly addictive, can harm the developing adolescent brain and can prime the brain for addiction to other drugs. Efforts to prevent youth tobacco product use have beneficial effects across the lifespan, as most adults who use tobacco products begin during adolescence.

Youth may not tell pediatricians about use of these nicotine products if asked specifically about smoking, vaping or e-cigarettes. Therefore, the FDA encourages pediatricians to ask patients about all tobacco product use, including nonconventional products like hookah, nicotine pouches and dissolvable products.

The FDA also encourages medical professionals, including pediatricians, to talk to patients and their parents about the harms of all tobacco product use to prevent youth from starting use and to help those who use those products to quit.

The FDA is working in several ways to address youth tobacco product use, including using a variety of surveillance tools to monitor the evolving tobacco product landscape and identify emerging threats to public health.

*The FDA’s Center for Tobacco Products contributed to this article.*

## Resources

- [Information on the FDA’s efforts to prevent youth from initiating tobacco use, health education resources and new and emerging tobacco products](#)
- [AAP policy statement](#), [clinical report](#) and [technical report](#) *Protecting Children and Adolescents from Tobacco*
- [AAP tobacco prevention resources](#)