

## Pediatricians encouraged to discuss dangers of accidental nicotine pouch exposure

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Food and Drug Administration

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The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has [called on](#) nicotine pouch manufacturers to use child-resistant packaging to protect children from accidental, harmful exposure.

Children may be tempted by the bright, colorful designs of many containers. Child-resistant packaging can serve as a critical safety barrier to prevent accidental ingestion of these nicotine products, which can be harmful and potentially fatal to young children.

Nicotine pouches are small fiber pouches that contain concentrated nicotine in the form of either nicotine powder or nicotine salts. Adult users put a pouch between their gum and upper lip, where the nicotine is absorbed into the body.

The pouches can pose health hazards even in small amounts if infants and children put them in their mouths or touch, chew on or eat them. Toxic effects in children under 5 have been reported with nicotine doses as low as 1-4 milligrams. Symptoms of nicotine poisoning may include confusion, vomiting and loss of consciousness.

During the three-year period of April 1, 2022, to March 31, 2025, the number of nicotine pouch exposure cases reported to U.S. Poison Centers steadily increased. Approximately 72% of reported nicotine pouch exposure cases occurred in children under 5 years of age. Ingestion was the reported route of exposure for almost all cases pertaining to nicotine pouch products (99%).

"There are nicotine pouches with fruity flavors and bright, colorful packages that could resemble candy and be attractive to children," said Bret Koplow, acting director of the FDA's Center for Tobacco Products. "Health care professionals, especially pediatricians, can play an important role in raising awareness with parents and caregivers so they know how to properly store these products and what to do in case of accidental nicotine exposure."

Pediatricians should remind parents and caregivers to safely store all nicotine pouches out of reach and view of children, such as in a high cabinet that locks. In addition, parents and caregivers should select nicotine pouches with child-resistant packaging, fully close the container and engage any child-resistant features of the packaging each time it is closed. Nicotine pouches should be stored in their original packaging, since transferring products to other containers that may not be child resistant could increase the risk of accidental exposure.

A list of nicotine pouches authorized to be sold in the United States is available at <https://bit.ly/44whHhE>. Authorization, however, does not mean these products are safe, nor are they "FDA approved."

If you believe someone is experiencing an adverse event from a nicotine pouch, immediately call the Poison Control HELP number at 1-800-222-1222. For more information on how to safely store nicotine pouches, visit <https://bit.ly/43RnpKN>.

The FDA also encourages pediatricians and other health care professionals to talk to parents and caregivers about properly storing nicotine-containing e-liquids (the liquid used in "vape" products), which can be dangerous if children touch or drink the liquid. For more information about the dangers of e-liquid exposures, visit <https://bit.ly/44pid0P>.

Health care professionals can report any tobacco-related health or product problem to the FDA through the Safety Reporting Portal at <https://www.safetyreporting.hhs.gov>.

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

***Editor's note:*** *FDA Update is provided by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration. AAP News has published this column since 2008 to keep pediatricians up to date on prescription drug indications and other relevant topics.*

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