



DON'T PUFF, JUST PASS:

The New Wave of Nicotine

In 1965, over 42% of adults in the U.S. were smokers compared to less than 12% in 2022—but this is only part of the story. Although smoking isn't as popular as it once was, the way people use tobacco is shifting.

Young people are increasingly shifting from traditional cigarettes and chewing tobacco to vaping. Many of the products that attract this audience are flavored, and because vaping doesn't involve burning, it avoids the unpleasant odor of cigarette smoke. As a result, young individuals may start vaping and develop a tobacco addiction at an early age.

While smoking rates for young people are continuing to trend downwards, over 2 million middle and high school students used vapes in 2021. And the flavored vapes are especially

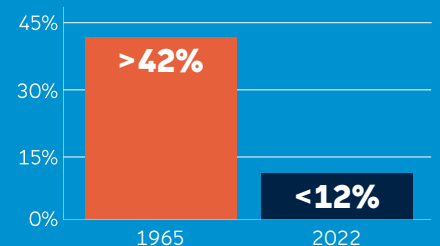
popular, with 80% of student smokers reporting using them.

Vaping is deceptive. The lure of e-cigarettes may be attributed in part to the non-odorous aspect unlike conventional cigarettes. According to data reported by the CDC, there aren't any safe tobacco products and that the aerosol vape users smoke present serious health risks, including:

- **Nicotine addiction:** It is exceedingly difficult to quit smoking, leading to serious health risks and complications.

Tobacco Use Since 1965

Smoking may be on the decline, but the way people consume nicotine is shifting.



- **Nicotine toxicity:** Vaping/e-cigarettes are not standardized meaning that have widely varying



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amounts of nicotine and other toxic and carcinogenic chemicals.

- **Exposure to carcinogens:** Tobacco smoke contains over 70 chemicals classified as carcinogenic, meaning cancer-causing.
- **Heavy metal exposure:** This is dangerously high for people who vape and use e-cigarettes according to researchers at Johns Hopkins University. Such research and data are resulting in calls for stringent regulation and oversight from organizations.
- **Lung damage:** Chemicals found in e-cigarettes harm lung tissue, leading to chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD).
- **Increased risk for heart diseases:** The National Heart, Lung, and

The chemicals and heavy metals found in e-cigarettes harm lung tissue and are very dangerous for people who use these products.

Blood Institute (NHLBI) has determined that e-cigarettes gravely damage blood vessels, leading to heart disease. Vaping increases risk for heart failure by nearly 20%.

Vaping and e-cigarettes present uniquely significant risks that cigarette smoking and chewing



tobacco do not such as injuries from battery malfunction or vape explosions.

Comprehensive information on the consequences of vaping and other forms of smoking are available at:



[Clear the Air: The Truth About E-Cigarettes, Vaping and Smoking.](#)

TIME TO QUIT

The third Thursday of November is the American Cancer Society's Great American Smokeout. This annual event encourages Americans to quit using tobacco products to reduce their risk for serious health consequences.

It is exceedingly difficult to disrupt addiction. The American Cancer Society provides critical resources such as a 24/7 support line and a Freshstart program. It is beneficial to stack resources proven to increase smoking cessation such as:

- Nicotine anonymous meetings
- Support from loved ones
- Self-help materials
- Smoking counselors and coaches
- Nicotine replacement
- Prescription medication for smoking cessation



No matter which path you choose, you have the power to quit smoking—and you don't have to do it alone. To join the Great American Smokeout and start your smoke-free journey, click here to visit the [American Cancer Society](#) webpage.



The **ComPsych Employee Assistance Program** also offers tools and resources to assist with nicotine cessation. Visit **GuidanceResources® Online** at www.guidanceresources.com and enter **Web ID: BCBSILEAP**.



SOURCES: Lung.org, HopkinsMedicine.org, Cancer.org, PublicHealth.JHU.edu, Lung.org, NIH.gov, ACC.org, CDC.gov, Cancer.org