

What is happening

- Youth are accessing and using **new nicotine products** (pouches) that are intended to support adults in quitting smoking.
- These products **do not currently fall under the scope of smoking and vaping regulations**. This means **youth can purchase these products easily** in convenience stores where they could be mistaken for gum or candy.
- These products are **made in flavours that appeal to youth** and create the potential for nicotine addiction with risk of future tobacco use.

Why it's a problem

- High levels of nicotine can be consumed by youth using both e-cigarettes and nicotine pouches.
- Nicotine is **highly addictive** and is **unsafe for children and youth**.
- Using nicotine in adolescence can have **negative effects** on the **developing brains** of children, impacting the parts that control attention, learning, mood, decision-making, and impulses while also increasing the likelihood of use of tobacco.
- One pouch can contain up to 4mg of nicotine, which is the equivalent of up to four cigarettes.
- There currently is a **high rate** of nicotine use among youth, **most commonly e-cigarettes**, with many youths indicating addiction. 19% of students in grades 7 to 12 reported using a vaping device, with rates as high as 30% among grade 12 students.
- Youth who use nicotine may not initially experience health concerns from using these products, but may report disruptions in sleep, mood, and their ability to focus.
- Consuming high amounts of nicotine can lead to nicotine toxicity, characterized by intense abdominal pain, nausea, vomiting, palpitations, hand tremors, headaches, difficulty concentrating, and in severe cases seizures and irregular heartbeat. **These symptoms can be magnified for younger and less experienced nicotine users.**

What you can do

Please speak with the youth in your life about the serious harms associated with the use of nicotine products.

- Youth are **less likely to use addictive substances** if parents **talk early and often** about the risks, establish clear rules and consequences, and regularly monitor activities.
- **Tobacco use by a family member or best friend increases the chance of tobacco use by 90%.** Youth and adults can role model positive behaviors and have a positive influence on peer tobacco use.

References

1. Public Health Ontario. Dec, 2023. Enhanced Epidemiological Summary: Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Youth Smoking, Vaping and Mental Health. Toronto, ON. Retrieved from Public Health Ontario website. https://www.publichealthontario.ca/-/media/Documents/ncov/epi/covid-19-epi-impact-mental-health-youth-cigarette-vape-users.pdf?rev=96e928f8ad484713b85c688f3ee6afc2&sc_lang=en



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