

Young People Who Try E-Cigarettes More Likely to Intend to Smoke Later

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Young people who used e-cigarettes are almost twice as likely to intend to smoke conventional cigarettes, a Centers for Disease Control (CDC) study published in *Nicotine and Tobacco Research* suggests.

In addition, more than a quarter of a million youth—263,000—who had never smoked a traditional cigarette said they used electronic cigarettes in 2013. The number is a 3-fold increase from the 79,000 recorded in 2011.

The survey data come from the National Youth Tobacco surveys of middle and high school students, conducted in 2011, 2012, and 2013.

Approximately half of the participants—43.9%—who smoked e-cigarettes said they had intentions to smoke conventional cigarettes within the next year. Meanwhile, only 21.5% of participants who had not smoked e-cigarettes had the same intention.

“The increasing number of young people who use e-cigarettes should be a concern for parents and the public health community, especially since youth e-cigarette users were nearly twice as likely to have intentions to smoke conventional cigarettes compared with youth who had never tried e-cigarettes,” Rebecca Bunnell, ScD, associate director for science in CDC’s Office on Smoking and Health, and lead author of the study, said in a press release.

The report also analyzed the association between tobacco advertisements and smoking intentions in middle- and high-school students, as well as where they saw the ads: the Internet, in magazines or newspapers, in retail stores, and in television programs or movies. The findings were consistent with previous studies determining that those who were exposed to product ads were more likely to smoke.

Furthermore, researchers found a rate of intention to smoke cigarettes increased in participants who saw more ads. Only 13% of participants who reported no exposure to ads reported intentions to smoke, whereas 20.4% of participants exposed to ads from 1 or 2 sources and 25.6% of participants exposed to ads from 3 or 4 sources had the

desire to smoke.

"We are very concerned about nicotine use among our youth, regardless of whether it comes from conventional cigarettes, e-cigarettes, or other tobacco products," Tim McAfee, MD, director of CDC's Office on Smoking and Health, said in a press release. "Not only is nicotine highly addictive, it can harm adolescent brain development."

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