



## A CUP OF HEALTH WITH CDC

### *Teens and Tobacco*

*Tobacco Use Among Middle and High School Students — United States, 2011-2015*

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*[Announcer] This program is presented by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.*

[Dr. Moore] Welcome to *A Cup of Health with CDC*, a weekly feature of the *MMWR*, the Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report. I'm Dr. Latetia Moore, filling in for your host, Dr. Robert Gaynes.

Tobacco use is well-documented as one of the leading causes of many severe illnesses, including cancer and heart disease. Discouraging tobacco use among young people can decrease the likelihood that they'll use it later in life.

Dr. Tushar Singh is a researcher with CDC's National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion. He's joining us today to discuss ways to prevent tobacco use among young people. Welcome to the show, Tushar.

[Dr. Singh] Thank you for having me.

[Dr. Moore] Tushar, is tobacco use among adolescents increasing or decreasing?

[Dr. Singh] Tobacco use among U.S. middle and high school students has remained unchanged since 2011.

[Dr. Moore] What tobacco products are most popular among teens?

[Dr. Singh] The most common tobacco products used by middle and high school students are electronic cigarettes or e-cigarettes, followed by cigarettes.

[Dr. Moore] And what exactly are e-cigarettes?

[Dr. Singh] E-cigarettes are part of a growing landscape of products more broadly known as electronic nicotine delivery systems, or ENDS. Other types of ENDS include vape pens, e-cigars, e-pipes, and e-hookahs. Some of these products are the same size and shape as regular cigarettes, while others are larger and can be modified by the user to include different flavors and nicotine concentrations. However, despite differences in appearances, these devices work the same way—they create an aerosol that the user inhales, which typically contains nicotine and other additives.

[Dr. Moore] Is e-cigarette use harmful to youth?

[Dr. Singh] Yes. Most e-cigarettes contain nicotine. Nicotine exposure during adolescence can cause addiction, might harm brain development, and could lead to sustained tobacco product use among youth. Some recent studies also suggest that youth who use e-cigarettes may be more likely to use traditional cigarettes in the future compared to those who don't.

[Dr. Moore] How can we discourage young people from using tobacco products?

[Dr. Singh] Proven tobacco control policies and strategies are critical to prevent youth use of all tobacco products. These interventions include increasing the price of tobacco products, adopting comprehensive smoke-free policies in indoor public areas, and implementing national public campaigns warning about the dangers of tobacco use. The implementation of these strategies, in coordination with regulation of tobacco products by FDA, could reduce youth tobacco initiation and use.

[Dr. Moore] Tushar, where can listeners get more information about tobacco use among teenagers?

[Dr. Singh] Listeners can get more information at [cdc.gov/tobacco](http://cdc.gov/tobacco).

[Dr. Moore Freeman] Thanks, Tushar. I've been talking today with CDC's Dr. Tushar Singh about the dangers of tobacco use among young people.

Nearly five million middle and high school students say they use some form of tobacco product. Parents, teachers, and others who can influence children should emphasize the health hazards associated with tobacco use.

Until next time, be well. This is Dr. Latetia Moore for *A Cup of Health with CDC*.

[Announcer] For the most accurate health information, visit [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov) or call 1-800-CDC-INFO.