



Vaping

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REMINDER:
hourly (including TPT & STS) and salaried employees and their eligible dependents can utilize substance use disorder programs available through their healthcare plan

1. What is it? The use of a battery-operated electronic device (such as an e-cigarette) that heats up and vaporizes a liquid, usually containing nicotine that the user inhales.

- ◇ Nicotine is the primary ingredient in e-cigarettes and tobacco products and it is highly addictive in both forms.
- ◇ A user may purchase cartridges of e-cigarettes with “extra-strength” nicotine.
- ◇ In 2015, Johns-Hopkins research shows the use of e-cigarettes increased by 900% in high school students.
- ◇ E-cigarette companies are adding fun flavors that appeal to teenagers.

2. Is vaping safer than smoking cigarettes?

- ◇ Vaping exposes the user to fewer toxic substances than smoking, however, the long-term effects of vaping are unknown.
- ◇ E-cigarette aerosol can contain harmful and potentially harmful substances, including:
 - ◇ Nicotine
 - ◇ Ultrafine particles that can be inhaled deep into the lungs.
 - ◇ Flavoring such as diacetyl, a chemical linked to “popcorn” lung is a serious lung disease.
 - ◇ May contain cancer causing chemicals.
 - ◇ Heavy metals such as nickel, tin, and lead.

- ◇ Absence of combustible tobacco smell.
- ◇ Many parents are unaware of what the devices look like, and mistake e-cigarette cartridges as computer flash drives.

4. How can I tell if my teenager is vaping?

- ◇ Sweet smell—many e-cigarettes contain flavors such as bubble gum, mango, etc.
- ◇ Blood shot eyes
- ◇ Irritability which could be a sign of withdrawal

5. Where Can I Get Help If I Am Struggling With Addiction?

- ◇ Contact your local hourly or salaried ESSP Representative.
- ◇ Speak with your Primary Care Physician (PCP) regarding treatment that is right for you or your eligible dependents.
- ◇ **Call SAMHSA’s National Helpline at 1-800-662-HELP**
- ◇ Contact your Healthcare provider for specific benefit information.
- ◇ HMSA—888-667-6603 (salaried employees)
- ◇ **HMSA—800-500-7200 (hourly employees)**

3. Is vaping addicting and why is it on the rise?

- ◇ Research from Johns Hopkins Medicine in 2018 found mice exposed to e-cigarette vapor experienced DNA damage in lung, bladder and heart. It is possible it may have similar effects on people.