



**NATIONWIDE CHILDREN'S**  
*When your child needs a hospital, everything matters.*

## Helping Hand™

*Health Education for Patients and Families*

### Vaping

Vaping is breathing in (inhaling) the aerosol made by an e-cigarette (electronic cigarette). The aerosol is called vapor. This is why smoking an e-cigarette is called vaping. E-cigarettes can be filled with chemicals that are toxic to breathe in.

#### E-cigarettes

E-cigarettes and vaping devices can look like common objects, such as pens or USB drives (Picture 1). They have less smell than cigarettes. This makes them easier to hide. Vaping devices may come with a charger and a refillable pod or cart (cartridge) that contains vape juice. Most vape juices have nicotine in them. They may also have chemical flavoring and, in some cases, THC (tetrahydrocannabinol), the active ingredient in cannabis.



**Picture 1** Vape devices can be shaped differently.

#### Nicotine

Nicotine is very addictive. E-cigarettes with nicotine are just as addictive as regular cigarettes.

- It can cause higher blood pressure and heart rate.
- Your child can become dependent on nicotine if they're using it often. This means they feel like they can't go without it.
- If your child tries to stop nicotine, they may have withdrawal symptoms like:
  - Cravings
  - Hard time sleeping
  - Irritation
  - Restlessness
  - Problems focusing

## Signs of Vaping

If you're afraid your child may be vaping, look for these signs. They may have:

- Changes in their mood.
- More or new nosebleeds.
- More time spent alone.
- A candy-like smell to their clothing, backpack, or bags.
- Dry mouth or throat, along with coughing more often.

## Reasons for Vaping

There are many different reasons teens may try vaping. Some common reasons are:

- Seeing what it's like
- Relaxing
- Trying to look cool
- Having a good time
- Feeling hooked like they have to have it (addicted)
- Feeling good or 'high'
- Thinking it tastes good
- Quitting regular cigarettes
- Feeling bored with nothing to do

## What to Do

- Talk to your children about their friends. Most children and teens that vape say they tried it first with a friend.
- Look at what your child is posting online. They may have posted on social media about vaping with friends.
- Have regular, open talks with your child. Talk to them about the risks of nicotine use, THC, and vaping.
- Quitting vaping may be as hard as stopping smoking. Some teens may do well by talking to a behavioral health professional (Picture 2). They can talk about how hard the habit is and learn healthier ways of coping with stress.
- If your child is addicted to vaping, call their doctor or health care provider. They may want your child to use nicotine replacement medicine.



**Picture 2** Your child may want to talk to a behavioral health professional about vaping.