

ASK THE DOCTOR

Teens and Vaping

Read this Q & A with **pediatrician Susan Walley, M.D.**, the chair of the American Academy of Pediatrics' Section on Tobacco Control. Then answer the questions on a separate sheet.

What are some misperceptions you would like to clear up for young people about e-cigarettes?

You need to know that e-cigarettes are not safe. They can cause coughing and wheezing, and changes in blood vessels. They also contain chemicals that cause cancer. Even if you are a "casual" user—you know, you say, *Oh, I'm only using on the weekends or with friends*—that can still lead to severe nicotine addiction. Some teens can experience symptoms of addiction after just a few weeks of use. Your brain doesn't completely mature until about 25 years of age—and when the brain is still developing, there's a higher likelihood of becoming addicted to things like nicotine.

I get so many comments like, *Oh, well, my friend told me that Juul was nicotine-free*—but it's simply not true.

If I tell my doctor that I vape, can they help me quit?

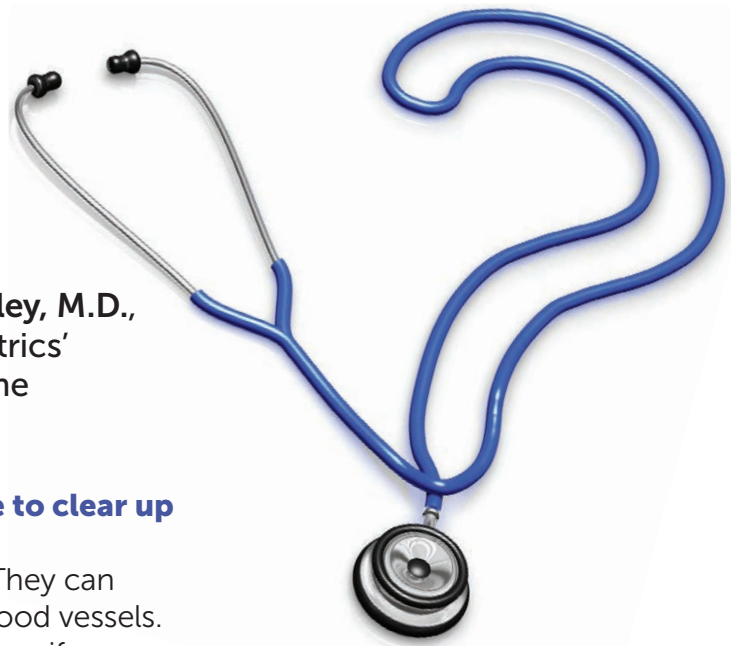
Yes. As pediatricians, it's part of our responsibility to advise you to quit and to help you to quit. And this conversation with your pediatrician is confidential. But I would encourage teens to talk to any trusted adult—whether that's a parent, a teacher, a counselor, or somebody in their scout troop.

Any other advice you want to give teens?

Not vaping is the best thing to do. It's important to know that the vast majority of teens do not vape, they do not want to vape, and they have not vaped. But when you're seeing all those social media posts about everybody vaping, you think that everybody vapes. It's also important to know that millions of teens have quit. And so it definitely is possible.

QUESTIONS

1. What health problems can teens develop from vaping?
2. What do you think is the most convincing piece of information from Dr. Walley about why teens shouldn't vape? Explain your answer.
3. What would you say to a friend who feels pressured to try vaping because they think everyone is doing it?



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