

## **Expecting Thanksgiving Discussions about Vaping Tobacco and Nicotine?**

**When you get together with family and friends around a Thanksgiving table do you expect the subject of vaping and vaping illnesses to come up? Do you worry that you don't know how to respond because you want to share accurate and helpful information?**

**Here are a few suggestions to help you respond about vaping tobacco and nicotine from the Tobacco-Free Community Partnerships in Massachusetts along with links you can follow to learn more.**

**Q:** I hear there is a ban on vaping and e-cigarette products in Massachusetts. What is that all about?

**A:** Governor Charlie Baker declared a public health emergency in response to the outbreak of severe lung illnesses associated with e-cigarettes and vaping. To protect the health of Massachusetts residents, the Commissioner of the Department of Public Health ordered a temporary ban on the sale of all vape and e-cigarette products in Massachusetts so that federal agencies have time to investigate the cause of the illnesses, which is still unknown. The ban is currently in effect until December 24, 2019.

**Q:** People say only off-the-street and homemade products are making people sick--so why is there a ban on everything?

**A:** All products are banned temporarily because it's not clear which products or substances are making people sick. The common factor linking all cases is a history of e-cigarette use and vaping. It's important to know that while the federal government is regulating certain aspects of e-cigarettes, this DOES NOT currently include the manufacturing of e-cigarettes and vaping products. What that means, is that no e-cigarette or vaping product sold in local convenience stores, vape shops, online or on the street has been tested and approved as safe to use. In addition, ingredients for e-juices are not regulated and therefore we can't really be sure what is in them or that they are safe and flavors have not been approved to heat up and inhale.

**Q:** What is in e-cigarettes? I hear that it is just flavored water. What is so bad about them?

**A:** Users may be inhaling harmful and potentially harmful substances. E-cigarettes contain pre-filled pods or e-liquids/e-juices that the user adds to the device. E-liquids generally consist of propylene glycol, glycerin, water, nicotine, and flavorings. E-cigarettes produce an aerosol, commonly called vapor, which users inhale from the device and exhale.

**Q:** What can I do to prevent my child or loved ones from vaping?

**A:** Simply talking with your child about these products can help protect them. Let them know that you care about them and that vaping is not safe. Tell them the facts: e-cigarettes contain nicotine, nicotine is a highly addictive substance. The smoke from vapes is an aerosol, not water vapor. The 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 a serious lung disease, volatile organic compounds, cancer-causing chemicals, heavy metals such as nickel, tin, and lead. Nicotine can damage a teenager's brain and lead to addiction.

**Q:** Now that these products are not available for purchase in Massachusetts, how can I encourage youth and young adults to quit vaping?

**A:** There are currently two programs available to help youth and young adults quit vaping, smoking or using other tobacco products.

**This is Quitting** powered by **truth®** is a texting program for young people who want to quit vaping. It is a free, confidential 30-day program during which youth receive texts with information, tips, and support. They receive daily text messages to help them prepare to quit and supportive texts from young people who have been through the program. To enroll in the program, youth text "VapeFreeMass" to 88709. Youth can also connect with their school nurse, counselor, or coach to help get them started.

**My Life, My Quit™** is a specially designed program to help young people quit vaping or other tobacco products. **My Life, My Quit™** provides five free and confidential coaching sessions by phone, live texting, or chat with specially-trained youth coach specialists. Youth can text "Start My Quit" to 855-891-9989 or call toll-free 1-855-891-9989 for real-time coaching. They can also visit [mylifemyquit.com](http://mylifemyquit.com) to sign up online, chat with a live coach, get information about vaping and tobacco, and find activities to help them quit.

**Q:** How can I help adults who are trying to quit vaping, smoking or using other tobacco products?

**A:** Call 1-800-QUIT-NOW to connect with the Massachusetts Smokers' Helpline. The Helpline is a free and confidential service for Massachusetts residents who want help to end their nicotine and tobacco use. If you are looking to quit tobacco, you can now get help from a quit coach over the phone; or use online tools and resources; or a combination of these online features and telephone coaching. You can also enroll online using a computer or smartphone at <https://ma.quitlogix.org/en-US/Enroll-Now>.

**Q:** How can I learn more information and stay up-to-date?

**A:**

- Facts about vaping, tips for parents, and information for schools from the Massachusetts Department of Public Health: [www.getoutraged.org](http://www.getoutraged.org)
- Basic facts for youth and a list of quitting resources for youth: [www.mass.gov/vaping](http://www.mass.gov/vaping)
- Weekly updated information about vaping-related illnesses from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: [www.cdc.gov/tobacco/basic\\_information/e-cigarettes/severe-lung-disease.html#latest-outbreak-information](http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/basic_information/e-cigarettes/severe-lung-disease.html#latest-outbreak-information)
- Information about the emergency vaping regulation in Massachusetts: [www.mass.gov/guides/vapingemergency](http://www.mass.gov/guides/vapingemergency)
- To contact the Tobacco-Free Community Partnership in your region: [www.makesmokinghistory.org/my-community/community-partnerships/](http://www.makesmokinghistory.org/my-community/community-partnerships/)

*The Greater Boston Tobacco-Free Community Partnership supports communities' efforts to lower smoking prevalence and exposure to secondhand smoke; enhance state and local tobacco control efforts*

*by exposing tobacco industry tactics; mobilizing the community to support and adopt evidence-based policies; and changing social norms. Funded by the Massachusetts Tobacco Cessation and Prevention Program, Community Partnerships serve as a resource for local coalitions, health and human service agencies, municipalities, and workplaces on tobacco intervention efforts.*