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Press Release

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E-cigarette use more than doubles among U.S. middle and high school students from 2011-2012

More than 75 percent of youth users smoke conventional cigarettes too

The percentage of U.S. middle and high school students who use electronic cigarettes, or e-cigarettes, more than doubled from 2011 to 2012, according to data published by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

The findings from the National Youth Tobacco Survey, in today's Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report, show that the percentage of high school students who reported ever using an e-cigarette rose from 4.7 percent in 2011 to 10.0 percent in 2012. In the same time period, high school students using e-cigarettes within the past 30 days rose from 1.5 percent to 2.8 percent. Use also doubled among middle school students. Altogether, in 2012 more than 1.78 million middle and high school students nationwide had tried e-cigarettes.

"The increased use of e-cigarettes by teens is deeply troubling," said CDC Director Tom Frieden, M.D., M.P.H. "Nicotine is a highly addictive drug. Many teens who start with e-cigarettes may be condemned to struggling with a lifelong addiction to nicotine and conventional cigarettes."

The study also found that 76.3 percent of middle and high school students who used e-cigarettes within the past 30 days also smoked conventional cigarettes in the same period. In addition, 1 in 5 middle school students who reported ever using e-cigarettes say they have never tried conventional cigarettes. This raises concern that there may be young people for whom e-cigarettes could be an entry point to use of conventional tobacco products, including cigarettes.

"About 90 percent of all smokers begin smoking as teenagers," said Tim McAfee, M.D., M.P.H., director of the CDC Office on Smoking and Health. "We must keep our youth from experimenting or using any tobacco product. These dramatic increases suggest that developing strategies to prevent marketing, sales, and use of e-cigarettes among youth is critical."

Electronic cigarettes, or e-cigarettes, are battery-powered devices that provide doses of nicotine and other additives to the user in an aerosol. E-cigarettes not marketed for therapeutic purposes are currently unregulated by the Food and Drug Administration. The FDA Center for Tobacco Products (<http://www.fda.gov/tobaccoproducts/default.htm>) (<http://www.cdc.gov/Other/disclaimer.html>) has announced that it intends to expand its jurisdiction over tobacco products to include e-cigarettes, but has not yet issued regulatory rules. Because e-cigarettes are largely unregulated, the agency does not have good information about them, such as the amounts and types of components and potentially harmful constituents.

Exhibit 2
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“These data show a dramatic rise in usage of e-cigarettes by youth, and this is cause for great concern as we don’t yet understand the long-term effects of these novel tobacco products,” said Mitch Zeller, director of FDA’s Center for Tobacco Products. “These findings reinforce why the FDA intends to expand its authority over all tobacco products and establish a comprehensive and appropriate regulatory framework to reduce disease and death from tobacco use.”

Although some e-cigarettes have been marketed as smoking cessation aids, there is no conclusive scientific evidence that e-cigarettes promote successful long-term quitting. However, there are proven cessation strategies and treatments, including counseling and FDA-approved cessation medications.

Cigarette smoking remains the leading preventable cause of disease, disability, and death in the United States, responsible for an estimated 443,000 deaths each year. And for every one death, there are 20 people living with a smoking-related disease. To quit smoking, free help is available at 1-800-QUIT NOW or www.cdc.gov/tips (<http://www.cdc.gov/tips>).

Under the Affordable Care Act, more Americans than ever will qualify to get health care coverage that fits their needs and budget, including important preventive services such as services to quit smoking that are covered with no additional costs. Get ready today for the new Health Insurance Marketplace. Visit Healthcare.gov or call 1-800-318-2596 (TTY/TDD 1-855-889-4325) to learn more. Open enrollment in the Marketplace begins October 1 for coverage starting as early as January 1, 2014.

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