

PART 1

E-CIGARETTES POSING HEALTH DANGER TO CHILDREN

PART 2

CONVERTING E-CIGARETTES FOR USE WITH THC OIL

The American Association of Poison Control Centers are urging the public, especially parents, to use caution when using e-cigarette devices and highly concentrated liquid nicotine and to keep them away from children. Poison centers throughout the United States are reporting a marked increase in calls about accidental exposure to e-cigarette devices and the liquid nicotine contained within or used to refill them. Emergency Rooms are also reporting an increase in children being admitted after coming in contact with e-cigarette devices and liquid nicotine.

WHAT ARE E-CIGARETTES?

Electronic cigarettes are smoking devices often designed to look and feel like regular cigarettes or colorful to appeal to teenagers, potentially serving as a gateway to nicotine addiction. They use cartridges filled with a liquid that contains nicotine, flavorings, and other chemicals. A heating device in the e-cigarette converts the liquid into a vapor which the person inhales known as “vaping.”

The e-cigarette comes in three sections: 1) battery, 2) the middle section called the vaporizer/atomizer that heats the liquid, 3) and the cartridge/mouth piece where the nicotine is stored. The cartridge is refillable and may contain up to 20 mg of nicotine per cartridge.

The amount of nicotine and chemical compounds in a cartridge can vary significantly between brands. The liquid refillable nicotine can be sold by the vial, the gallon, and even the barrel, and, as of yet, not regulated by the FDA.

Most e-cigarette cartridges range between 1.8% and 2.4% concentrations, however, higher concentrations of 7.2% or 10% are widely available on the internet.

E-liquids are powerful neurotoxins and should be considered a poison. When refilling a cartridge a small amount of e-liquid dropped on the skin is immediately absorbed and can cause a severe reaction.

THE DANGER TO CHILDREN

E-liquids come in many flavors like: cotton candy, gummy bear, bubble gum, cherry, peppermint, chocolate, peach schnapps, pina colada, java jolt – and give off a fragrant smell.

Wonderful odors, brightly colored packaging tweak the curiosity of a child to take it apart and/or to taste it. Even a tiny amount of e-liquid, whether ingested or absorbed through the skin of a child, can cause vomiting, seizures, salivation, and increased heart rate and blood pressure. A teaspoon of highly diluted e-liquid, if ingested, can kill a small child.

The American Association of Poison Control Centers recommends the following steps:

- Protect your skin when handling the product.
- Always keep e-cigarette devices and liquid nicotine locked up and out of the reach of children.
- Follow the specific disposal instructions on the label.
- If you think someone has been exposed to an e-cigarette or liquid nicotine, call your doctor or local poison center at 1-800-222-1222 immediately.

CONVERTING E-CIGARETTES FOR USE WITH THC OIL

Law enforcement agencies are warning parents and teachers that teens are converting e-cigarettes to use with marijuana (THC) oil, liquid, or wax.

Gaining popularity among high school and middle school students is pairing the e-cigarette with THC oil, the chemical responsible for most of marijuana's psychological effects, to achieve a potent high that can be 10 times more powerful than smoking marijuana.

There is no smell so students can use these devices unnoticed at home or in the classroom. The e-cigarette is small, can be carried easily concealed, and used without notice. The use of THC oil is causing additional concern among parents and school administrators. If an e-cigarette is found in the possession of a student on a school campus it may lead to suspension.

Because of the increasing availability and often peer pressure to use e-cigarettes, parents should openly discuss with their teen the potential dangers associated with the use of these devices for vaporizing either nicotine or marijuana.

RESOURCES TO CONTACT & ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- Rocky Mountain Poison & Drug Center (303-389-1100)
- Poison Help (800-222-1222) (info@rmpdc.org)
- Poison Prevention Children's Hospital of Colorado
- Safe Kids Denver (720-777-8412) (www.usa.safekids.org)
- Colorado Department of Education – How Marijuana Harms Youth (<http://www.cde.state.co.us/dropoutprevention/resources>)
- Colorado Department of Public Health & Environment (<http://www.colorado.gov/cs/Satellite/CDPHE-Main/CBON/125158347000>)
- Colorado School Safety Resource Center – Marijuana (<http://www.colorado.gov/cs/Satellite/CDPS-SafeSchools/CBON/1251648143387>)
- How Marijuana Harms Youth Brochure
http://dthurstone.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/07/How_Marijuana_Harms_Youth_2_Side_FactSheet.pdf