

Flavored Tobacco Products

What types of tobacco products are flavored?

There are several types of flavored tobacco products on the market, including cigars, chewing tobacco, blunt wraps, electronic cigarettes and shisha, the tobacco used in hookah.

What are common flavors used in tobacco products?

Products are sold in an endless array of fruit, candy, dessert and novelty flavors. Scientists recently found that the same flavorings used in tobacco products are also used in candy and Kool-Aid.⁹

Who uses flavored tobacco products?

Because of their sweet flavors, low cost and attractive packaging, flavored tobacco products are especially appealing to youth. Young people are much more likely to use flavored tobacco products than adults.¹⁰ Studies show that young people perceive flavored tobacco products as tasting better and being safer than unflavored products, even though they are just as dangerous and addictive as unflavored tobacco products.¹¹

How do flavors in tobacco products affect youth?

Nearly 90 percent of adult smokers began smoking before 18.¹² The flavoring in these products makes it easier for new, young users to take up tobacco, because the flavoring masks the harshness of the tobacco and enhances the user's pleasure.^{13,14} Flavored products often serve as a "starter" product for young people, many of whom eventually move to smoking cigarettes.

What does the tobacco industry say about flavored tobacco?

The tobacco documents from the U.S. Tobacco Master Settlement revealed the "Graduation Theory," a method used by the tobacco industry that aims to secure customer loyalty.¹⁵ This approach implies that new users start with milder tasting and flavored products. They then graduate to full-bodied, less flavored items that often contain more nicotine and remain addicted for life.

Why should people care about flavored tobacco products?

Flavored tobacco products are a major public health concern because they encourage young people to start using tobacco. While the FDA banned flavored cigarettes other than menthol in 2009, the ban does not affect other tobacco products, many of which are now heavily marketed by the tobacco industry.¹⁶ The use of these products, especially among young people, has spiked.

What communities have regulated flavored tobacco?

New York City, Providence, R.I., Minneapolis, Minn., and Saint Paul, Minn., have passed policies restricting flavored tobacco sales, with the exception of menthol-flavored products.

In Minnesota, many cities, including Minneapolis, Saint Paul, Richfield and Maplewood, have adopted ordinances that require cigars to be sold for a minimum price of \$2.60 each with packs of four or more cigars being sold for a minimum of \$10.40. These ordinances are meant to make cigars, many of which are flavored, more expensive and less appealing to price-sensitive youth.