

# Electronic Smoking Devices and Secondhand Aerosol

## *What are electronic smoking devices and how do they work?*

Electronic smoking devices (or ESDs), are also called e-cigarettes, vape pens, MODS, hookah pens, vape sticks, e-pipes, e-cigars, etc. ESDs have a battery-powered heating element that heats a cartridge filled with a liquid (e-juice), which is vaporized for inhaling.

## *What is secondhand aerosol?*

Secondhand smoke exposure occurs when non-smokers inhale smoke that is exhaled by a smoker or from the burning end of a tobacco product. Similarly, ESDs produce and emit dangerous “secondhand aerosol” (incorrectly called “vapor” by the tobacco industry) that contains nicotine, heavy metals, ultrafine particles, and toxins known to cause cancer. When you are around somebody who is using an ESD, you breathe in the toxic secondhand aerosol.



## *What should you know about ESDs and secondhand aerosol?*

- ESDs secondhand aerosol is NOT as safe as clean air.
- ESDs do NOT only emit harmless water vapor. They emit toxic aerosol.
- Nicotine, a highly addictive substance, is found in ESDs and can be dangerous for pregnant women and fetuses, children, and adolescents.
- Secondhand aerosol exposure may cause respiratory illnesses like asthma, and constrict arteries that could trigger a heart attack.

**For more information:** Contact the Thomas Jefferson Health District’s Tobacco Control Coordinator at 434-422-4555



10/17

## Health Whys

A public health message from  
[www.tjhd.org](http://www.tjhd.org)

Follow us on  
Facebook



**VDH** VIRGINIA  
DEPARTMENT  
OF HEALTH  
*Protecting You and Your Environment*

You can find this and other timely public health tips and events on the Thomas Jefferson Health District (TJHD) Facebook page. Check us out and “like us!”