

Nicotine Pouches and Young People



What Are Nicotine Pouches?



- Nicotine pouches are packets of nicotine powder, flavorings, and other chemical substances that are placed inside the mouth between the lip and gum. Nicotine absorption occurs through the lining of the mouth.
- Nicotine pouches are available in a range of nicotine strengths and a variety of flavors.
- All of the major tobacco companies sell nicotine pouches, including Philip Morris International's (PMI) ZYN, Altria's On!, Reynolds American's VELO, Swisher's Rogue, and ITG Brands' Zone, but there are many brands from smaller companies too.
- In the U.S., manufacturers must obtain a marketing authorization from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to sell nicotine pouches. To date, 20 flavored varieties of ZYN and 6 flavored versions of On! PLUS have received marketing granted orders from FDA to be sold in the U.S.
- In open defiance of FDA's regulatory authority, tobacco companies are selling products without marketing authorization, meaning most of the products on the market are untested and illegal. For instance, Reynolds American has been selling VELO PLUS pouches and Grizzly nicotine pouches without authorization.

Why Should We Be Concerned?

The last thing we need is for another highly appealing and addictive tobacco product to be widely available and promoted to young people.

- Nicotine pouches are flavored and easy to conceal – two features that drove youth e-cigarette use to epidemic levels.
 - Nearly 86% of youth pouch users use a variety of flavored products.¹
 - Nicotine pouches are small and do not require spitting so they're easy to conceal for covert use in school or in other public places.
- Nicotine pouches are widely promoted on social media and in ways that appeal to youth, including music and sports sponsorships. PMI prominently features ZYN branding at sponsored music concerts, gives away ZYN-branded merchandise, and sponsors a Formula 1 race car.
- Celebrities and influencers such as Post Malone, Diplo, Joe Rogan, and Tucker Carlson have promoted nicotine pouches.
- Teachers and school officials report that nicotine pouches are increasingly being found on school grounds.²
- Nicotine pouch sales have skyrocketed³ and PMI is investing in manufacturing facilities to increase production.⁴
- These products should not be used by adults who don't currently use tobacco or nicotine products. There is not enough evidence to recommend nicotine pouches for smoking cessation.⁵



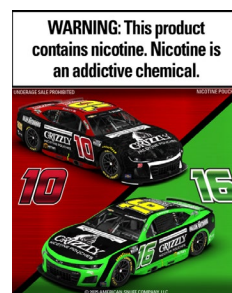
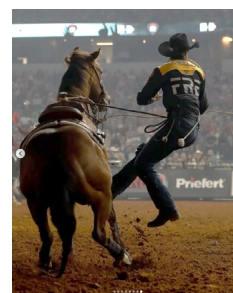
Nicotine Pouches Pose Risks to Youth and Young Adults

No nicotine product is safe for kids.

- Youth and young adult use of nicotine pouches has risen drastically in recent years.⁶
 - In 2024, 480,000 middle and high school students reported currently using nicotine pouches, more than double the number from 2021.⁷ National survey data may lag behind local reports, so the number of youth users could well be higher.
 - Past-year nicotine pouch use rates among young adults (19-30 years old) doubled between 2023 and 2024, from 4.8% to 9.5%.⁸
- All nicotine pouches contain nicotine, a highly addictive substance. Nicotine pouches can deliver nicotine at levels similar to cigarettes.⁹
- Nicotine exposure during adolescence can harm the developing brain, which continues to develop until about age 25, and can impact learning, memory, and attention. Nicotine can also prime the brain for addiction to other drugs.¹⁰
- Nicotine exposure can be toxic to young children, causing vomiting, seizures, respiratory failure, and even death. Reports of unintended nicotine ingestion from nicotine pouches by children under 6 years old rose between 2020 and 2023.¹¹

States Must Regulate Nicotine Pouches to Protect Youth

- States should close loopholes in the tax code and implement sales restrictions on flavored tobacco products, age of sale laws, licensing laws and remote delivery laws.
- States should also apply any other tobacco control regulations and requirements to nicotine pouches to ensure equal treatment across all tobacco products and to prevent youth accessing and youth use.



¹ Park-Lee, E, et al., "E-Cigarette and Nicotine Pouch Use Among Middle and High School Students — United States, 2024," *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report (MMWR)* 73(35):774-778, September 5, 2024, <https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/73/wr/pdfs/mm7335a3-H.pdf>.

² Truth Initiative, "It's Everywhere" Middle and high school educator perspectives on nicotine use in schools, September 2025, <https://truthinitiative.org/sites/default/files/media/files/2025/09/Educator%20Perspectives%202025.pdf>.

³ CDC Foundation, "Monitoring Sales: Nicotine Pouch Trends," October 2025, https://tobaccomonitoring.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/10/Nicotine-Pouch-Sales-Data-Brief_8.10.2025.pdf. Data from Circana, which includes e-cigarette sales data from convenience stores, gas stations and other retail store chains. Sales from the internet and tobacco-specialty stores, including vape shops, are not included.

⁴ "Philip Morris to invest \$232 million to expand ZYN production at Kentucky plant," *Reuters*, August 27, 2024, <https://www.reuters.com/business/retail-consumer/philip-morris-invest-232-million-expand-zyn-production-kentucky-plant-2024-08-27/>.

⁵ Cochrane Database of Systematic reviews, *Oral nicotine pouches for cessation or reduction of use of other tobacco or nicotine products*, October 24, 2025, <https://doi.org/10.1002/14651858.CD016220.pub2>.

⁶ CDC Foundation. (2025). Monitoring Tobacco Product Use Among Youth and Young Adults in the U.S. TEEN+ Data Brief, Issue 2. <https://tobaccomonitoring.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/09/Tobacco-Epidemic-Evaluation-Network-Data-Brief-Issue-2.pdf>.

⁷ Park-Lee, E, et al., "E-Cigarette and Nicotine Pouch Use Among Middle and High School Students — United States, 2024," *MMWR* 73(35):774-778, September 5, 2024, <https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/73/wr/pdfs/mm7335a3-H.pdf>.

⁸ University of Michigan, Nicotine pouch, cannabis, vaping, psychedelic use on the rise among US adults, August 26, 2025, <https://news.umich.edu/nicotine-pouch-cannabis-vaping-psychedelic-use-on-the-rise-among-us-adults/>.

⁹ Travis, N, et al., "The Potential Impact of Oral Nicotine Pouches on Public Health: A Scoping Review," *Nicotine & Tobacco Research*, advanced access, June 17, 2024, <https://doi.org/10.1093/ntr/ntae131>.

¹⁰ HHS, *E-Cigarette Use Among Youth and Young Adults. A Report of the Surgeon General*, 2018.

¹¹ Olivas, M, et al., "Nicotine Ingestions Among Young Children: 2010-2023," *Pediatrics* 156(2):e2024070522, doi: 10.1542/peds.2024-070522, 2025.