

Health groups protest new Camel magazine ads

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The American Heart Association, American Lung Association and several other health groups are asking at least two state attorneys to investigate a new Camel cigarette ad campaign.

The group says the Camel Crush cigarette ads ran in 24 magazines that target young people and may violate the Tobacco Master Settlement Agreement. The landmark agreement, among other measures, prohibits [cigarette makers](#) from targeting kids.

The ad, which appeared in magazines such as Sports Illustrated and People, promotes the company's Camel Crush brand, which contains a capsule in the cigarette's filter that, when crushed, releases menthol flavor.

It is not the first time the Winston-Salem, North Carolina, company has faced criticism for its advertising.

Reynolds was widely criticized for years for using its Joe Camel cartoon character as a means to make smoking more attractive to kids. It has faced several lawsuits over a number of its ads. And R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Co. decided in 2007 to suspend its print ads under intense criticism for its advertising.

Print ads for tobacco are banned in a number of countries but legal in the United States. [Tobacco advertising](#) is already banned from the radio, television and billboards.

[Tobacco companies](#) instead have relied on direct marketing and other methods to promote their products.

Menthol flavored cigarettes have also come in for scrutiny. Critics say they appeal to kids because the flavor masks the harsh taste of tobacco smoke. The U.S. [Food and Drug Administration](#) is studying the effects of menthol flavoring in cigarettes on public health.

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