

# Teens still able to access e-cigarettes during COVID-19 pandemic

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(HealthDay)—Underage youth report being able to access electronic

cigarettes from online and retail stores during the COVID-19 pandemic, according to a study published online Dec. 3 in *JAMA Network Open*.

Shivani Mathur Gaiha, Ph.D., from Stanford University in Palo Alto, California, and colleagues conducted an online survey to assess change in [e-cigarette use](#) (increase, decrease, quit, no change, and switch to another product) and access to e-cigarettes (easier or harder and change in point-of-purchase) before and after the COVID-19 pandemic began.

The researchers found that among the 2,167 respondents who were [e-cigarette](#) ever-users, 56.4 percent changed their use, with 32.4 percent quitting, 35.3 percent reducing the amount of nicotine, 17.6 percent increasing nicotine use, 7.8 percent increasing cannabis use, and 6.9 percent switching products. Not being able to go to vape shops and product unavailability made accessing e-cigarettes difficult during the pandemic. However, individuals reported purchasing from alternative [retail stores](#) (between 18.1 and 23.7 percent) and purchasing online instead of retail (between 18.2 and 19.8 percent). More than one-fourth of respondents (27.5 percent) self-reported accessing e-cigarettes without age verification, including e-cigarette deliveries from vape shops or dealers.

"Despite the fact that underage youth likely experienced greater restrictions on their movement and use of e-cigarettes in their home, we observed no significant difference in their quitting behavior compared with [young adults](#)," the authors write.

One author disclosed being a paid expert scientist in some e-cigarette litigation and an unpaid scientific advisor and expert witness regarding some tobacco-related policies.

**More information:** [Abstract/Full Text](#)  
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