

Link between e-cigarette use and early age of asthma onset in US adults discovered

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A significant link between the use of electronic cigarettes and earlier age of asthma onset in U.S. adults was reported by UTHealth Houston researchers May 17, 2024 in *JAMA Network Open*.

Led by first author Adriana Pérez, Ph.D., MS, professor of biostatistics and data science at UTHHealth Houston School of Public Health, the research found that adults who were asthma-free at the beginning of the study and reported e-cigarette use in the past 30 days increased their risk of developing earlier age of asthma onset by 252%.

"While previous studies have reported that e-cigarette use increases the risk of asthma, our study was the first to examine the age of asthma onset," said Pérez, who is also with the Michael and Susan Dell Center for Healthy Living at the School of Public Health. "Measuring the potential risk of earlier age of asthma onset as it relates to past 30-day e-cigarette use may help people from starting use or motivate them to stop."

The study team analyzed secondary data from the Population Assessment of Tobacco and Health Study, a national longitudinal study of tobacco use and how it affects the [health](#) of adults and youths in the U.S.

"The findings of the study underscore the need for further research, particularly regarding the impact of e-cigarette use on youth and its association with early age of asthma onset and other respiratory conditions," Pérez said.

"It also highlights the importance of modifying screening guidelines to incorporate recent use of e-cigarettes, which could lead to earlier detection and treatment of asthma, reducing the morbidity and mortality associated with the disease."

Pérez said the study highlights the need to address the health burden of asthma, which results in \$300 billion in annual losses due to missed school or workdays, mortality, and [medical costs](#) according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Tobacco regulations,

prevention, intervention campaigns, and cessation programs are needed to prevent early age of [asthma](#) onset due to [e-cigarette use](#), the authors wrote.

More information: Use of Electronic Nicotine Delivery Systems and Age of Asthma Onset Among US Adults and Youths, *JAMA Network Open* (2024). [DOI: 10.1001/jamanetworkopen.2024.10740](https://doi.org/10.1001/jamanetworkopen.2024.10740)

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