



FLAVORED COMMERCIAL TOBACCO PRODUCTS

THE TOBACCO INDUSTRY SELLS MANY TYPES OF FLAVORED PRODUCTS

Flavored commercial tobacco products include cigarettes, cigars, chewing tobacco, blunt wraps, e-cigarettes (also known as vapes) and shisha (tobacco used in hookah). These products help the tobacco industry bypass the FDA's 2009 ban of flavored cigarettes other than menthol.¹ Menthol is the only flavor allowed in cigarettes.

COMMERCIAL TOBACCO PRODUCTS ARE OFFERED IN THOUSANDS OF FLAVORS THAT APPEAL TO YOUTH

There are more than 15,000 e-cigarette flavors on the market including a variety of kid-friendly flavors like *Cereal Milk*, *Bazooka Sour Straws* and *Gummy Worm*. E-cigarettes, specifically disposables, are the most popular commercial tobacco product used by youth.²

Cigars, chewing tobacco, blunt wraps, vapes and shisha are sold in fruit, candy, dessert and novelty flavors. Popular flavors include chocolate, piña colada, apple, grape, berry, cotton candy, bubble gum, mango, mint/ wintergreen and menthol.

These are “truly candy-flavored tobacco products” as the same chemical flavorings used in commercial tobacco products are also used in popular candy and fruity drinks.³

Tobacco companies add menthol to commercial tobacco products to cool the throat and make them taste better.⁴

FLAVORED PRODUCTS ARE MARKETED TO YOUTH, LGBTQ+ COMMUNITIES AND AFRICAN AMERICANS

The tobacco industry uses flavored products to attract the next generation of smokers.⁵

Young people are much more likely to use flavored commercial tobacco products than adults, and most young users said they would no longer use the product if it was not flavored.⁶

In fact, 85% of youth who vape use fruit, candy or menthol flavored products.⁷



E-cigarette packaging often has colorful designs and resembles popular imagery familiar to youth.



E-cigarettes come in thousands of flavors such as Rainbow Candy (shown above), Blue Raspberry Ice and Cotton Candy

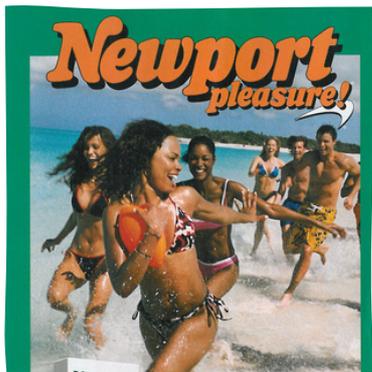


Cheap cigars come in bright packages and a wide variety of flavors, such as grape, strawberry, blueberry, tropical fusion and chocolate/vanilla swirl.



Non-medical nicotine lozenges, nicotine pouches and nicotine gummies like these pictured above are the second most prevalent nicotine product used by adolescents.

MORE ABOUT MENTHOL FLAVORED COMMERCIAL TOBACCO



The tobacco industry heavily targets African Americans with menthol cigarettes by advertising in popular magazines.

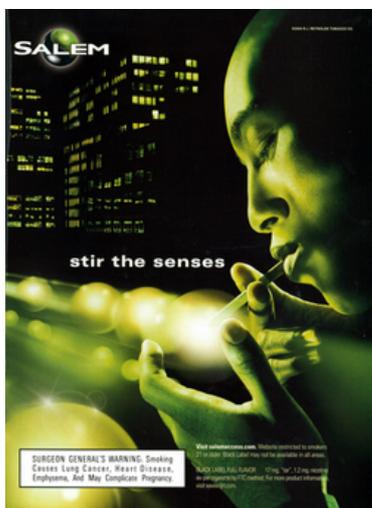


Photo credit: Trinkets and Trash

The tobacco industry also attracts customers by offering price discounts, as seen below.



Photo credit: Trinkets and Trash



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References are available at ansrmn.org/flavors

The tobacco industry has a long history of aggressively targeting certain populations with menthol product marketing including racial and ethnic minority groups, particularly African Americans; youth; women; and LGBTQ+ people.^{9,10}

FLAVORED PRODUCTS, LIKE MENTHOL, MAKE IT EASIER TO START AND HARDER TO QUIT

Flavored commercial tobacco is a threat to health equity. For example, because of industry targeting, 85% of African Americans who smoke, smoke menthols.¹⁰ Menthol flavored tobacco is easier to start and harder to quit¹³ than quitting non-menthol cigarettes, and African Americans who smoke menthols may be even less successful quitting than those in other communities.^{14,15}

Compared to non-menthol, menthol cigarettes are associated with moving to regular smoking among youth and young adults.¹¹ People who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender (LGBT) who smoke are more likely to smoke menthol cigarettes than heterosexual people who smoke.¹²

COMMUNITIES CAN TAKE ACTION TO RESTRICT THE AVAILABILITY OF FLAVORED PRODUCTS

States and local communities can adopt sales restrictions to address menthol cigarettes and other flavored commercial tobacco products that appeal to youth. Six states and more than 170 U.S. cities or counties have restricted the sale of all flavored commercial tobacco products including menthol cigarettes.¹⁶ Limiting the sale of products, setting a minimum price or creating a minimum pack size are some of the ways communities can protect their youth by making flavored products less accessible and less appealing.¹⁷

Despite a 2020 FDA ruling banning the sale of certain pod-based flavored e-cigarettes, thousands of flavored products were left on the market, including all disposable e-cigarettes, the most popular device type used by young people.

The public is waiting for the FDA to act on its April 2022 proposed rule to ban menthol in cigarettes and cigars. While this is a much-needed step for curbing commercial tobacco use, the final ruling will likely take years and leaves out all other menthol flavored commercial tobacco products.



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ANSR is dedicated to reducing the human and economic costs of commercial tobacco, nicotine and other drug use in Minnesota.



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