Use of JUUL e-cigarettes among youth in the United States

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Abstract
Introduction: JUUL has emerged as the leading brand in a rapidly evolving electronic cigarette (e-cigarette) market. JUUL is distinctive for its novel nicotine delivery method that results in high nicotine concentrations, as well as its sleek, discreet design. This study examined national estimates of JUUL among youth in the United States, including whether JUUL users report different patterns of use compared to users of other e-cigarettes.

Methods: Data were analyzed from the US arm of the International Tobacco Control Policy Evaluation Project (ITC) Youth Tobacco and E-cigarette Survey, an online survey conducted in July-August 2017 with youth aged 16-19 years recruited from consumer panels (n = 4086).

Results: Overall, 14.2% of respondents had used an e-cigarette in the past 30 days. JUUL was the second-most popular brand reported by past-30-day e-cigarette users (9.7%). Compared to e-cigarette users of other brands, JUUL users were significantly older (adjusted odds ratio [aOR] = 2.50, 95% confidence interval [CI] = 1.56 to 4.01) and reported a greater number of computers in the household (a socioeconomic status proxy; aOR = 1.55, 95% CI = 1.22 to 1.96), with no differences by sex, race/ethnicity, or student status. Controlling for sociodemographic variables, JUUL users were more likely than other e-cigarette users to have ever tried to quit e-cigarettes (aOR = 2.65, 95% CI = 1.12 to 6.30), with no differences observed by smoking status, frequency of e-cigarette use, urges to use e-cigarettes, or perceived addiction to e-cigarettes.

Conclusions: JUUL was among the most popular e-cigarette brands among youth, and there were few differences in sociodemographic profile or patterns of use between users of JUUL and other e-cigarette brands. Implications: This study examined national estimates of JUUL e-cigarette use among youth in the United States, during the early phase of JUUL’s popularity. JUUL was among the most popular e-cigarette brands among youth, and there were few differences in sociodemographic profile or patterns of use between JUUL and other e-cigarette brands. The findings help to characterize the rapid rise of this new product category within the rapidly evolving e-cigarette market at a time when the US Food and Drug Administration and public health community are seeking to understand JUUL and its appeal among young people.

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