

Fast Facts

To provide you with the best science and to reduce review time, please find the following science-approved facts for use in your campaigns and materials. After each fact you will also find fast facts based on the science that can be cut and pasted word-for-word without need for additional science review. Please note that any change in wording will result in the need to run your documents through science review before release.

Menthol Tobacco

FACT 1

Among youth tobacco product users, 530,000 (46.7%) report current use of menthol cigarettes.

Fast Facts:

- ▶ Approximately half of youth using tobacco products report using menthol cigarettes.
- ▶ More than half a million youth tobacco users report using menthol.
- ▶ Nearly 50% of youth ages 12-17 who smoke traditional cigarettes use menthol.

Source:

Wang TW, Gentzke AS, Creamer MR, et al. Tobacco Product Use and Associated Factors Among Middle and High School Students — United States, 2019. *MMWR Surveill Summ* 2019;68(No. SS-12):1–22. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.15585/mmwr.ss6812a1>

FACT 2

Menthol cigarette use is highest among Hispanic youth (50.8%) in comparison to Black youth (39.6%) and white youth (45.8%).

Fast Facts:

- ▶ Hispanic youth have the highest rate of menthol cigarette use compared to white and black youth.
- ▶ Half of Hispanic youth tobacco users report using menthol.
- ▶ Nearly half of white youth tobacco users report using menthol cigarettes.
- ▶ Four in ten black youth tobacco users report using menthol cigarettes.
- ▶ Menthol use among youth tobacco users is highest among Hispanic youth, followed by white and then black youth.

Source:

Source: Wang TW, Gentzke AS, Creamer MR, et al. Tobacco Product Use and Associated Factors Among Middle and High School Students — United States, 2019. *MMWR Surveill Summ* 2019;68(No. SS-12):1–22. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.15585/mmwr.ss6812a1>

FACT 3

When asked what they would do if menthol cigarettes were no longer sold, 64.6% of young menthol smokers indicated that they would quit smoking and not use any other products.

Fast Facts:

- ▶ Approximately two-thirds of youth who use menthol cigarettes say they would quit if menthol products were no longer sold.
- ▶ Nearly two of every three youth who use menthol cigarettes say they would quit if menthol products were no longer available.
- ▶ Nearly 65% of young menthol smokers say they would quit if menthol cigarettes were banned.

Source:

Wackowski OA, Manderski MT, Delnevo CD. Young Adults' Behavioral Intentions Surrounding a Potential Menthol Cigarette Ban. *Nicotine & tobacco research: official journal of the Society for Research on Nicotine and Tobacco*. 2014

FACT 4

Although overall smoking prevalence has decreased, the proportion of past 30-day cigarette smokers using menthol cigarettes was higher (39%) in 2012–2014 compared to 2008–2010 (35%). Youth smokers remain the most likely group to use menthol cigarettes compared to all other age groups. Menthol cigarette prevalence has increased in white, Asian and Hispanic smokers since 2010. Menthol cigarette prevalence exceeded non-menthol cigarette prevalence in youth and young adult smokers in 2014.

Fast Facts:

- ▶ Between 2004 and 2014, fewer youth were using traditional cigarettes, but the decline in use was greater in non-menthol cigarettes than menthol. More youth and young adult smokers use menthol products than non-menthol cigarettes.
- ▶ Menthol cigarettes are slowing the reductions in overall cigarette smoking rates. From 2004 to 2014, the decline in cigarette consumption was greater for non-menthol cigarettes than menthol cigarettes. Menthol smoking prevalence now exceeds non-menthol smoking prevalence among both youth and young adult smokers.

Source:

Villanti AC, Mowery PD, Delnevo CD, Niaura RS, Abrams DB, Giovino GA. Changes in the prevalence and correlates of menthol cigarette use in the USA, 2004-2014. *Tobacco control*. 2016;25(Suppl 2):ii14-ii20.

FACT 5

Among cigarette smokers, menthol cigarette use was more common among 12–17 year olds (56.7%) and 18–25 year olds (45.0%) than among older persons (range 30.5% to 34.7%). Among all adolescents, the percentage who smoked non-menthol cigarettes decreased from 2004–2010, while menthol smoking rates remained constant. Among all young adults, the percentage who smoked non-menthol cigarettes also declined, while menthol smoking rates increased.

Fast Facts:

- ▶ Data from nationally representative samples show that the youngest cigarette smokers use menthol at the highest rates.
- ▶ Menthol cigarettes are used by young smokers at higher rates, and menthol cigarettes may increase the likelihood of nicotine addiction.
- ▶ Menthol cigarettes are disproportionately used by young smokers and may facilitate addiction.

Source:

Giovino GA, Villanti AC, Mowery PD, et al. Differential trends in cigarette smoking in the USA: is menthol slowing progress? *Tobacco control*. 2015;24(1):28-37.

FACT 6

Menthol cigarette use among current smokers in the U.S. by age, 2012–2014:

Ages 12 to 17 – 53.9%

Ages 18 to 25 – 50%

Ages 26 to 34 – 43.9%

Ages 35 to 49 – 32.3%

Ages 50+ – 32.9%

Fast Facts:

- ▶ Half of youth and younger current smokers are using menthol cigarettes.
- ▶ Half of cigarette users under the age of 25 choose menthol cigarettes.

Source:

Villanti AC, Mowery PD, Delnevo CD, Niaura RS, Abrams DB, Giovino GA. Changes in the prevalence and correlates of menthol cigarette use in the USA, 2004-2014. *Tobacco control*. 2016;25(Suppl 2):ii14-ii20.

FACT 7

In 2017, menthol cigarettes were 36 percent of the market among major manufacturers, while non-menthols were 64 percent.

Fast Facts:

- ▶ Menthol accounts for more than one-third of the US cigarette market.
- ▶ Menthol remains popular and accounts for more than one-third of the US cigarette market.
- ▶ Menthol makes up one-third of Big Tobacco's cigarette sales in the US.
- ▶ Menthol makes up a large portion — 35 percent in 2016 — of the cigarette market in the U.S.

Source:

Federal Trade Commission. Federal Trade Commission Cigarette Report for 2017. 2019.

FACT 8

Despite research showing that menthol cigarettes are easier to start smoking and harder to quit, only 34.6 percent of U.S. localities that restrict the sale of flavored tobacco products (90 of 260) include a restriction on menthol cigarettes.

Fast Facts:

- ▶ A very small portion of the US population is covered by a menthol cigarette ban, despite research showing menthol is easier to start using and harder to quit.
- ▶ Even though research shows that menthol cigarettes make it easier to start smoking and harder to quit, only 34.6% of localities restricting the sale of flavored tobacco products is also protected by a restriction on menthol cigarettes.

Source:

Foulds J, Hooper MW, Pletcher MJ, Okuyemi KS. Do Smokers of Menthol Cigarettes Find It Harder to Quit Smoking? *Nicotine & Tobacco Research*. 2010;12(Suppl 2):S102-S109.

Nonnemaker J, Hersey J, Homsy G, Busey A, Allen J, Vallone D. Initiation with menthol cigarettes and youth smoking uptake. *Addiction*. 2013;108(1):171-178.

Campaign for Tobacco Free Kids. States & Localities That Have Restricted the Sale of Flavored Tobacco Products. March 18, 2020. <https://www.tobaccofreekids.org/assets/factsheets/0398.pdf> Accessed on April 7, 2020

FACT 9

If menthol cigarettes were banned, 38.9 percent of all menthol smokers and 44.5 percent of African American menthol smokers reported that they would try to quit.

Fast Facts:

- ▶ Restricting the sale of menthol cigarettes would help those who are addicted. Research has shown that nearly 40% of all menthol smokers and nearly 45% of African American menthol smokers would try to quit.

Source:

Pearson JL, Abrams DB, Niaura RS, Richardson A, Vallone DM. A ban on menthol cigarettes: impact on public opinion and smokers' intention to quit. *American journal of public health*. 2012;102(11):e107-114.

FACT 9

African Americans make up 84.6% of all menthol cigarette users.

Fast Facts:

- ▶ African Americans suffer the greatest burden of tobacco-related death of any racial or ethnic group in the United States.
- ▶ Nearly 45,000 African Americans die annually from a smoking-caused illness.
- ▶ Menthol flavored tobacco products are a big driver of these disparities.

Source:

Villanti AC, Mowery PD, Delnevo CD, Niaura RS, Abrams DB, Giovino GA. Changes in the prevalence and correlates of menthol cigarette use in the USA, 2004-2014. *Tobacco control*. 2016;25(Suppl 2):ii14-ii20.