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# AMA Strengthens Policy on Electronic Cigarettes to Further Protect Youth

**For immediate release:**

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*New policy includes call for minimum legal purchase age of 21 for e-cigarettes*

CHICAGO - With the growing popularity of electronic cigarettes among the nation's youth, the American Medical Association (AMA) today adopted new policy to further strengthen its support of regulatory oversight of electronic cigarettes. The policy calls for the passage of laws and regulations that would: set the minimum legal purchase age for electronic cigarettes and their liquid nicotine refills at 21 years old; require liquid nicotine to be packaged in child-resistant containers; and urge strict enforcement of laws prohibiting the sale of tobacco products to minors.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's 2014 National Youth Tobacco Survey, e-cigarette use among middle and high school students tripled from 2013 to 2014. The survey data showed e-cigarette use among high school students increased from 4.5 percent in 2013 to 13.4 percent in 2014--an increase from approximately 660,000 to 2 million students. Among middle school students, the data indicated that e-cigarette use more than tripled from 1.1 percent in 2013 to 3.9 percent in 2014--an increase from approximately 120,000 to 450,000 students.

"The AMA continues to advocate for more stringent policies to protect our country's youth from the dangers of tobacco use and improve public health. The AMA's newest policy expands on the AMA's longtime efforts to help keep all tobacco products, including electronic cigarettes, out of the hands of young people, by urging laws to deter the sale of electronic cigarettes to anyone under the age of 21," said AMA President Robert M. Wah, M.D. "We also urge the U.S. Food and Drug Administration to act now to implement its proposed rule to effectively regulate electronic cigarettes."

The new policy extends existing AMA policy adopted in 2013 and 2014 calling for all electronic cigarettes to be subject to the same regulations and oversight that the FDA applies to tobacco and nicotine products, seeking tighter marketing restrictions on manufacturers, and prohibiting claims that electronic cigarettes are effective tobacco cessation tools.

"[Improving the health of the nation](#) is AMA's top priority and we will continue to advocate for policies that help reduce the burden of preventable diseases like cardiovascular disease and type 2 diabetes, both of which can be linked to smoking," said Dr. Wah.

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