Hello and welcome to the Rx Counter podcast produced by student pharmacists at the University of Iowa College of Pharmacy where we provide student insight into the pharmacy profession. I'm your host Matt Yates in here today is p one student Emily style who's brought the article team e cig uses an epidemic or many adults vape to quit smoking by Kara young. Emily, thank you for joining us and the counter is yours.

Unknown Speaker 0:26
Thanks, Matt for having me. So today we're going to talk about e cigarettes otherwise known as bait being and role the pharmacist has and helping patients with smoking cessation. So the article talks about the dilemma that pharmacists have trying to not have teens use e cigarettes, but also helping adults try to use these e cigarettes to quit smoking. So as we all know, e cigarettes has had an increase in popularity and teens. And especially on campus. I know I see tons of people smoking or using e cigarettes or on campus. So how much like information do we actually know about these e cigarettes And what role do pharmacies have in like, preventing teens from using these? So from the article, it stated that in February 2019, the FDA and CDC said that more than 3.6 million middle and high schoolers were e cigarette users in 2018. And that was an increase of more than 1.5 million students in one year. So the health professionals encouraged these devices for adults who are wanting to quit smoking as an alternative, healthier way to continue their addiction to nicotine and smoking. But these e cigarettes have caught grabbed the attention of kids, as like one of the quotes from the article from Scott Gottlieb. And the article said that kids using e cigarettes are children who rejected conventional cigarettes, but don't see the same stigma association with the use of E cigarettes. So we all know there's like a stigma to cigarettes where the person is unhealthy or they have that smell of cigarettes on them. So how can we have Like the same stigma with the E cigarettes, where we see them as like a popular way or like popular kids do are like it's a new, I don't know and you know, a new trend for like teens to do this. So how is like pharmacies? Can we recommend these two adults for them to like stop smoking, but also like make sure these teens aren't using them for like a fad or a way to get addicted to nicotine, which can also get them addicted to actual cigarettes as well. So I know what are your opinions on it? Like how can pharmacists like help with that and like recommending for adults to say that but for teens not to do that?

Unknown Speaker 2:45
It's interesting to see this kind of come full circle. It's a it's interesting because the

Unknown Speaker 2:54
generation before us, the generations whatever

Unknown Speaker 2:59
the cool Kids were the ones that used to go away and hang out in the bathroom smoke cigarettes. So it's almost like that's coming full circle. It's like the next iterations, technology catching up with cool kids. Then how we got past that is education to a certain extent. And I feel

Unknown Speaker 3:18
like a lot of what made that such like a powerful like,

Unknown Speaker 3:27
message to not smoking

Unknown Speaker 3:29
is the side effects that came along with it. They were like straightforward, like, your teeth are gonna start turning yellow, your skin's gonna sag more, you're gonna get old, faster, whatever. But those things are always proud of, I feel like they were always kept separate from the fact that it's still nicotine addiction and the damage that it does to your lungs. So I wonder if education

Unknown Speaker 3:56
is kind of the first step that we can take,
you know, at this point, it's really a Hard to tell people what happens to your body when you're vaping for a long time, because these e cigarettes haven't been around or on the market for a long time, like cigarettes have closer to like a decade, probably and popular use within the last five years. So it's really hard to say this is going to make your teeth rot or all of that, but we do know the effects of nicotine on the body. And I don't think that's stated enough or taught to patients as much as it should be compared to the carcinogens of a cigarette. Right.

It's an argument of tobacco versus nicotine. And I think the biggest thing when they're trying to get people to stop smoking regular cigarettes was the Yeah, like you said, Matha tobacco is really bad for your teeth and your gums and it's going to make you look bad, but what nicotine is going to do is adapt to you and then also increase your risk of cardiovascular diseases. But so we don't know necessarily about lung cancer risk yet with vaping. But nicotine is still in almost all, there are different kinds of a thing, but it's in a majority of the E cigarettes. And that nicotine is what's going to still increase your cardiovascular risk and increase your ultimate chance of death.

And so that's why it's not always a good thing for smoking cessation either because it doesn't have the long term sustainability, to quit smoking, like the FDA approved forms of nicotine replacement therapy, or smoking cessation therapy, like the patches and the gums and the lozenges. So it's something for both adults, as well as teams to be thinking about the

I know the FDA hasn't even approved in cigarettes as a way for people to stop smoking so and now they just increase the law, you have to be 21 to buy nicotine or E cigarettes now. So maybe that will also like help teens to stop maybe having access to getting these e cigarettes as well.

I think the power of one, and the mob mentality plays consideration with this. And that's where education very important. takes one person on social media such as Twitter to say, you cannot get addicted to E cigarettes. They're great for you and you look cool. And that gets 10,000 retweets. And now we've reached a population of 10,000 people who think it's okay. But that can go with vape lung that we've seen in hospitals where patients are dying from this. If we get the same momentum behind that and the education is placed, and we get 50,000 retweets, it's just that don't have that much of an impact. So I think utilizing platforms such as Twitter, social media, anything like that, talking to your patients, your friends, seeing someone on the streets who might be vaping in informing them of the risk, not only the short term, but the long term, and there might not be that hard evidence that we want to back up. But we see this babe long on in the hospital, and we seen results of people dying in the common denominator is vaping. And to me, that's enough evidence right then and there. I think

It's important going into those conversations about knowing that this is not something that you should be doing is recognizing that even going into it. It's going to you're going to be set at a disadvantage. And that's why having that conversation having a structured the right way knowing what you're going to say being able to back it up because Because it's you saying you can't do something when people in another group are saying that you can. So being the one to say no being the one to say, this is a bad idea is not always the easiest thing. Which kind of dovetails nicely with our role in smoking cessation as counselors as people to recommend different therapies, statewide protocols. That's one of the big things smoking cessation therapy is kind of where pharmacists can really offer a lot of benefit, but going into those conversations, knowing that we're going to be people that are saying how we're going to be that proverbial bad guy. It's going to be a tough place to go for, but it's still an important role for us to play.

Yeah, I think it's very important, like you said, how you maneuver around that conversation. Because if you go to someone who's vaping and you say, You're an idiot for vaping, you shouldn't be doing this. However, They're going to respond. You're right. I am an idiot. No, probably? Probably not. So if you go, maybe ask them, can you tell me why you're vaping? Or why you enjoy doing this? hear their opinion on it, and then inform them what you know about it.
Starting that conversation builds that rapport with them, some, then they will be able to listen to you, as opposed to just putting them down for doing it.

Unknown Speaker 9:24
Oh, I'm just going to mention like, I actually have a friend outside of the College of Pharmacy who tried to quit her e cig. And it was due to the fact that she used to smoke and then she switched to this thinking that was going to help her quit. And she's been addicted forever. So the point I was trying to make was that law did help because she is under the age of 21. So she has tried to quit because she can't get it here. So I mean, I tried to help her quit by educating which at that point, it didn't really work as well. The only thing that did work was someone passed away from it and her mom forgot about it. So You have to quit. So that was another thing to death does cause people to rethink what they're doing. So that was one thing, but I know that she's been trying to quit and I tried taking it away from her and keeping it at my apartment away from her, but it didn't work either. So I'm not sure what the best route is to help her because I've educated she's seen on social media. her mom's told her No, and the law has helped but I'm sure there are people who could probably get it for her because she doesn't know people above the age of 21. So that is the problem too is we need to like educate other people to not help support people who do it that are older, that make sense, but that was the point I was gonna make. I've tried and you know, it's difficult but

Unknown Speaker 10:50
but wonder if then that becomes a question of access. Is there too much of it out there, where you can just say, Hey, I know you're going to start you wanted to swing through and pick some up for me. I know what there is the flavor ban, which would probably help in terms of people accessing things that are based on a

Unknown Speaker 11:11
restriction of age is a good first start. But as Paul kind of mentioned, if you want it, you will get it. So you'll find a way you'll find maybe a fake ID or a friend to go buy it for you who is of age. So that's where it's important for us to really grab on to that population who might not be able to buy it yet on their own, and then give them that education.

Unknown Speaker 11:31
Well, on the way used to be an age of 18 and Middle School. Right, right. I just gonna say that there's no way that all of these middle schoolers could have gotten it from a store. I saw way more people vaping with E cigarettes or jewels or whatever device you want, before I even started noticing them being sold in stores. like Whoa, that Where'd that come from? I think online is where most of these things are coming from. And it's so easy to click and say, Oh, yeah, I'm 18. I'm 21 now, and then you just order it and the lots of good first step, but I think we really need to I Darren was saying, to get the Twitter campaign going and get that 550 k retweets, you know,

Unknown Speaker 12:27
we were almost the generation that completely wiped out smoking. It's crazy that we're that there. It's because we made smoking, not cool. We were telling people that, you know, in addition to the side effects, it just doesn't look cool. It's not professional to smoke in right now. I mean, it's a social thing at the college level that everyone is vaping it's cool to do that. So in addition to the education behind why you shouldn't do vaping it's important from a personal standpoint to say this is not cool. This is not The way you want to look and perceive yourself. And this is the changes that we need to make one of the things. That's the difference between the smoking and then the vaping that someone already mentioned is the smell. So I like it used to be really easy to say, Hey, I don't like the smell, can you not smoke in here, and then there's an mo and a lot of states, there's laws against doing it inside, but that didn't immediately carry over to vaping. And when somebody has some strawberry scent coming out of their mouth, you don't usually say anything. But, you know, I still have asked some of my friends that are inside with me to not the fake while I'm there or go outside. So just that exclusion as well. It's not even because that was my original intention to exclude that but it's because I didn't want maybe I don't like the sound of strawberry in my face the whole time. Some people are more sensitive to smell, but overall it's a combination of I don't want it around me, but maybe that will help them to realize it. But don't know if everyone's at that step yet. Well, I'm like the

Unknown Speaker 14:06
social media thing. There's like, videos of people like him with funny videos on like, destroying their tools. So maybe like promote like, this is fine like you should destroy your job. Like some people did, like I don't know, they like buried
like they had like actual funeral further like jumar Yeah, I saw video. So I'm saying like maybe we could like promote that kind of thing. Like, it's funny. They're like

Unknown Speaker  14:34
the campaign to center your audience, around 2% of your argument around your audience is very important. Because if we just sit there and we start reading off a list, this isn't good for you because of this, this and that. Don't do it. Then the commercial ends. You didn't grab anybody's attention, but doing it in a funny way that someone's like, you know, that was pretty funny. Let me do it. Maybe I'll do i'm not even ready to stop waving but I like social media. Attention. So I'll create a video on it. So whatever way it takes to the audience right now it is that younger demographic, mainly I know it's spread beyond that, but catering your argument towards them. And if it requires a funny video, so be it and do it that way.

Unknown Speaker  15:16
I know my brother is in high school, and he doesn't want to go to the bathroom because that's where people wait. They like Yeah, yep. So he, he avoids going to the bathroom because he's afraid he's gonna get in trouble for being in the bathroom because people are vaping and then the fire alarms go off and then everyone has to evacuate. So it's just like, that's not cool. Either. He doesn't want to go into the bathroom and smell it or see people doing it and be in that environment as well. So I think it's hard for him and just going having to go to the bathroom. It's like that's a normal function, just want to go to the bathroom, and he doesn't want to go in there. So it's like

Unknown Speaker  15:58
changing direction now. I think As a student pharmacist, soon to be pharmacist, we're going to have to spend a lot of our time getting familiar with nicotine cessation, not necessarily smoking cessation at this point, but there's going to be a lot of people that we have to treat that are addicted to nicotine, and really utilizing our tools. Now, like we mentioned previously, the patches, guns, lozenges, even prescription medications might need to be utilized as far as Chantix or Veronica. And just be super comfortable with that. Soon, maybe we might be able to prescribe them on the spot and say, Okay, see, you have this issue. And you've been on this jewel for your entire high school career. We're gonna have to start you super high. Another issue with that is that nicotine products are electronic. You know, vapes are not regulated. And then old rules trying to like, crack down on that and say this is how much nicotine is in our pod or whatever. But not everyone uses a drill. So Not everyone gets the same amount of nicotine. They don't even know I think the article mentioned that a juice was labeled as zero nicotine and tested to be like 24 units of measurement in that one little pot. I don't know what it is, but that's a big difference to say, someone that or to have someone come in and say, Oh, I vape but I don't get any nicotine. But I have all of the signs and symptoms of cravings and nicotine dependence. So Being able to recognize that would be important to, it's important to remember that

Unknown Speaker  18:03
it's not just the nicotine. That's the problem to the fact that when you make there has to be some sort of heating element in the device. And usually that's made of metal, that lets loose all sorts of its own carcinogens, whether it's heavy metals, mercury, cadmium,

Unknown Speaker  18:20
stuff like that active oxygen species, we have snacks

Unknown Speaker  18:25
everywhere, but

Unknown Speaker  18:27
realizing that it's not

Unknown Speaker  18:28
just what's in it, but it's the actual mechanism behind it. That's could be an issue. There's realizing that there's more it is.

Unknown Speaker  18:37
I know there was in the article they were saying there was a little paragraph about saying what do teen says in their e
cigarette and 66% thought it was just flavoring. So it's just like the manufacturing of how they put it on the package to say what's in it as well like what Matt was saying or like, education to like, say what's actually like in these e cigarettes because 66% of teens Saying just flavoring is in their e cigarette is not accurate or true.

Unknown Speaker  19:06
So I think like the article said this is an epidemic might not be a disease outbreak, but it is a big issue. And we definitely need to be educated ourselves on how to identify the problem, how to actually impact the patient as opposed to we are just telling them, Hey, stop, you're an idiot, because no one will respond to that.

Unknown Speaker  19:34
And back to educating ourselves. I think it's important not to base your conclusion off of one piece of literature, as we've been taught, the literature actually contradicts itself a lot of times. So going through and reading multiple studies on on vaping and they contain replacement patches and all that stuff and how to treat it is very important because the literature As of right now, does contradict itself sometimes. So finding out and really analyzing the literature to get your personal conclusion will be important because if patients ask you questions, or if their parents ask you questions, or providers ask you questions, you want to be able to back that up.

Unknown Speaker  20:22
I think it's also remember, remember in literature that you have to reflect. If you didn't get deep enough into it, you have to realize, ask yourself, how wealth is the population included in this study reflect the people that I'm taking care of? If the study this talked about middle aged, healthy males in their mid 40s not going to be super applicable to a bunch of high school kids. That

Unknown Speaker  20:52
that might be amazing message for all the literature.

Unknown Speaker  20:57
Translation practice.

Unknown Speaker  20:57
Absolutely.

Unknown Speaker  20:59
Well That's all the time we have. And we thank you for bringing this to our attention. For everyone else listening. I hope you learned if you did pass the lessons along your friends and family. Thanks for listening. We'll catch you next time at The Rx Counter.

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