

# The Truth About **MENTHOL** Flavored Tobacco

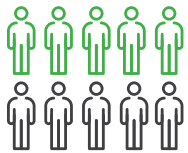
**Menthol** makes cigarettes easier to smoke and harder to quit.

**Menthol** provides a cooling effect in the back of the throat, reduces the harshness of cigarette smoke and suppresses coughing.

**Menthol** was first added to cigarettes in the 1920s and 1930s and became widespread in the 1950s and 1960s.



## Menthol and Youth



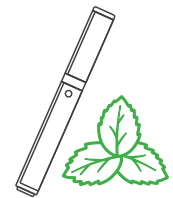
Nearly **50%** of youth ages **12-17** who smoke traditional cigarettes use **menthol**.



Nearly **65%** of young menthol smokers say they would quit if **menthol** cigarettes were banned.

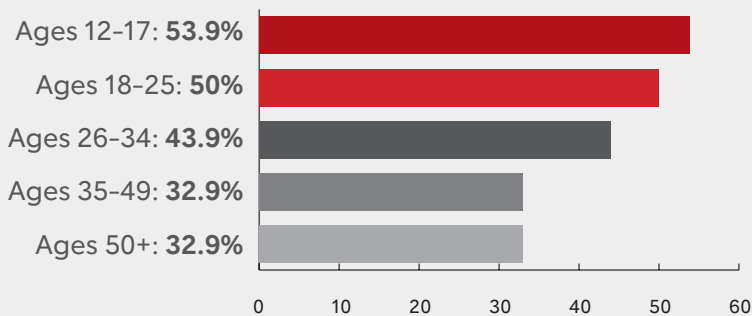


Nearly **60%** of high school students who use e-cigarettes use **mint** or **menthol** flavored products.



With **menthol** e-cigarettes remaining on the market, **more kids** will gravitate towards them, even as other **flavored products** come off.

### Menthol cigarette use among current smokers in the US by age, 2012-2014:



## Menthol and African Americans

African Americans suffer the greatest burden of tobacco-related death of any racial or ethnic group in the United States.

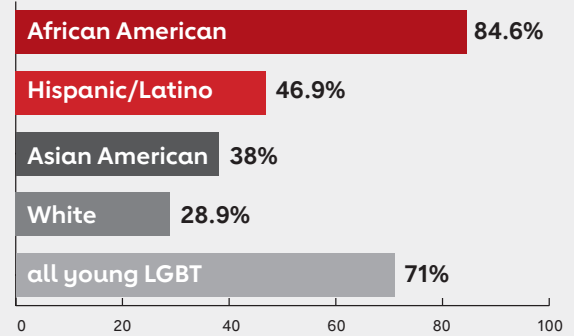
Nearly 45,000 African Americans die annually from a smoking-caused illness.

**Menthol** flavored tobacco products are a big driver of these disparities.

Big Tobacco's shameful record includes targeting youth and adults in communities of color and underserved populations with **menthol products resulting in the disproportionately higher use rates by minority smokers:**



## Use of Menthol Tobacco Products



Cigarette companies are known to specifically **target low-income neighborhoods** with in-store advertising for **menthol** cigarettes.

## Federal Action - Menthol And Flavored Tobacco Restriction Timeline

**2009**  
Congress bans the sale of flavored cigarettes, except for **menthol**, leaving that action up to the FDA

**2011**  
Tobacco industry, led by Lorillard (now R.J. Reynolds) filed a lawsuit trying to prohibit the FDA from using the TPSAC report, a district court judge sided with Big Tobacco, the FDA appealed this decision

**July 2013**  
FDA releases its own evaluation of **menthol** finding that **menthol** cigarettes likely pose a greater public health risk than non-menthol versions, and requested public comment

**March 2018**  
FDA requests public comment on the role of flavorings in tobacco products, including **menthol**

If a **menthol** cigarette ban had been enacted in 2011, it could have saved 320,000 lives by 2050.

**March 2011**

FDA's Tobacco Products Scientific Advisory Committee (TPSAC), created by the **Tobacco Control Act**, issues report concluding removal of **menthol** cigarettes in the marketplace would benefit public health in the US

**April 2013**

20 leading health organizations, including the American Heart Association, file a **Citizen Petition** urging the FDA to prohibit **menthol** as a characterizing flavoring in cigarettes

**2016**

D.C. Circuit reversed the district court's decision, **now allowing the FDA to rely on the TPSAC menthol report to regulate menthol tobacco products**

**January 2020**

FDA issues policy to restrict sale of certain flavored e-cigarettes but allow **menthol** flavors and flavored liquid nicotine used in open tank systems and disposable e-cigarettes to remain on the market