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SAFE Glen Cove Coalition: The Truth About the Rise in Nicotine Sold Through Oral Nicotine Pouches

Research from Truth Initiative finds that oral nicotine pouches are taking over more of the nicotine market, even as disposable e-cigarette sales continue to grow.

Oral nicotine pouches are one of the fastest growing nicotine product categories, and some people are dual-using with e-cigarettes or cigarettes. At the same time, illegal and disposable e-cigarettes continue to proliferate, offering more nicotine at cheaper prices. In the U.S, only 45 e-cigarettes and 26 oral nicotine products are authorized for sale by the U.S. Food & Drug Administration (FDA), making most products on the market illegal.

The authors of this study used NielsenIQ retail sales data to compare oral nicotine pouch sales to e-cigarette sales by nicotine weight. They found that oral nicotine pouches surpassed disposable e-cigarettes in nicotine sales, demonstrating how much more widely used these products have become.

Key takeaways from this study:

- The amount of nicotine sold in e-cigarettes and pouches has skyrocketed. Kilograms of nicotine sold in e-cigarettes and oral nicotine pouches jumped from 655 kg to 9,218 kg between 2017 and 2024, an increase of 1,307% over six years.
- Oral nicotine pouches are outselling disposable e-cigarettes in nicotine sold by weight. By March 2024, total kilograms of nicotine sold through oral nicotine pouches (3,407 kg) were greater than those of all disposable e-cigarettes (3,123 kg) which are not authorized for sale and are on the market illegally.
- Oral nicotine pouches are taking over more of the nicotine product market. Oral nicotine pouches were responsible for 37% of nicotine sold by weight by e-cigarettes and oral nicotine pouches in 2024, up from 0.6% in 2017 – a 6,067% increase in market share. Kilograms of nicotine sold through oral nicotine pouches went up nearly 900X, from 3.8 kg to 3,407 kg between 2017 and 2024.

- Disposable e-cigarette sales have grown rapidly. The market share of disposable e-cigarettes in the total e-cigarette market increased from 28% to 53% of the total kilograms of nicotine sold. Total weight of nicotine sold through disposable e-cigarettes increased by 1,625% – from 181 kg to 3,123 kg – between 2017 and 2024.

Because this study did not capture online or small business sales of e-cigarettes or oral nicotine products, the amount of nicotine sold nationally is even higher than reported.

These findings illustrate the need for quitting resources specifically for e-cigarette and oral nicotine pouch users, and further research on the long-term health impacts of these products. Given the addictiveness of nicotine and the staggering amount sold, resources are needed to protect young people from initiating nicotine use and help current users quit. Tailored, personalized resources for exclusive e-cigarette and pouch users are also needed.

The researchers also urge the FDA to remove all illegal products from store shelves, finalize regulations capping nicotine levels, and monitor marketing strategies that appeal to young people, state false claims, and encourage nicotine use.

The Truth Initiative is the nation's largest nonprofit public health organization dedicated to preventing youth and young adult nicotine addiction and empowering quitting. Research is conducted through the Truth Initiative Schroeder Institute that produces independent research to provide evidence for policy change and leadership in cessation research. For more information, please visit www.truthinitiative.org.

SAFE, Inc. is the only alcohol and substance abuse prevention, intervention, and education agency in the City of Glen Cove. Its Coalition is concerned with cigarette smoking and all combustible and electronic products with tobacco. The Agency employs environmental strategies to educate and update the community regarding the negative consequences of smoking and vaping. To learn more about the SAFE Glen Cove Coalition please follow www.facebook.com/safeglencovecoalition or to learn more about electronic products visit the Youth and Tobacco Use and Vaping Facts and Myths Pages of SAFE's website to learn more about how vaping is detrimental to your health at www.safeglencove.org.