

Special Populations: ENDS Use in Active Military and Veterans

How prevalent is ENDS use in the active military?

According to a 2018 DoD report, ENDS use in the military is prevalent with 16% reporting current use.



Current E-Cigarette Use by Service Branch

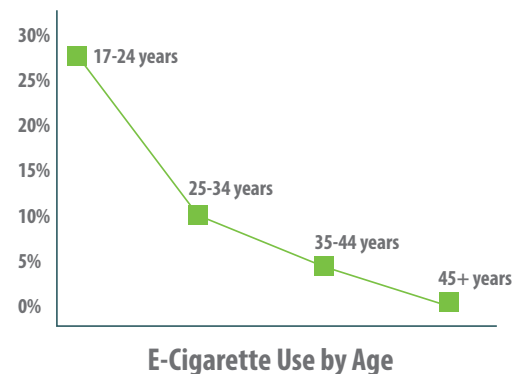
- ENDS use rates differ by branch of service and ranges from 13.9% to 22.6%.
- Service members who are younger are more likely to endorse current ENDS use.
- 27% of enlisted service members self-identified as a current e-cigarette user, while only 1% of senior officers endorsed current e-cigarette use.



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Learning Objectives:

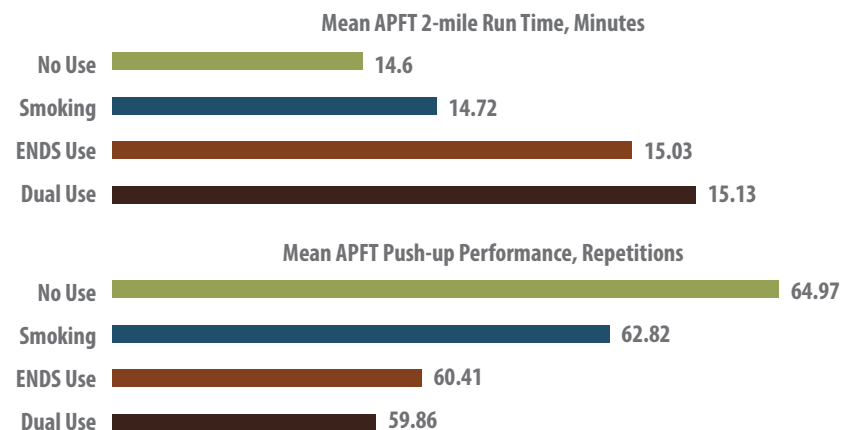
1. Review prevalence of ENDS use among current and former service members.
2. Discuss factors associated with ENDS use in the active military and veteran population.
3. Examine the public health implications of ENDS use in current and former service members.



E-Cigarette Use by Age

What is the public health impact of ENDS use in the active military?

- Service members who endorsed ENDS use exhibited poor levels of fitness compared to non-users on the 2-mile run and 2-minute pushup test.
- Dual users (those who endorsed both ENDS and conventional cigarette use) exhibited the lowest fitness levels of all groups.



How prevalent is ENDS use in veterans?

There is little information available about the prevalence of ENDS use in the veteran population.

Researchers recommend that more consistent documentation of ENDS use in veterans' electronic health records is needed to understand patterns of ENDS use in this population.

Preliminary research among veterans with psychiatric comorbidities suggests offering veteran smokers their choice of ENDS products to use can lead to reductions in conventional cigarette smoking, lower breath carbon monoxide levels, and decreased nicotine dependence.

How are active service members and veterans targeted by ad campaigns?

Much like what tobacco companies have been doing for decades, makers of ENDS products are targeting current and former service members in their marketing campaigns.

They use testimonial endorsements from veterans, as well as military discounts and other strategies (e.g., downplaying possible risks) to target this population.

Research shows that individuals who are exposed to ENDS advertisements and who perceive ENDS to be less harmful are more likely to use ENDS. Therefore, it may be helpful to talk about these risks with your patients.

JUUL targets military and veterans in recent advertising campaign.



Source: <https://www.nature.com/articles/d41586-019-02991-w>



Source: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC8101685/>

References

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