



HEALTH EQUITY HIGHLIGHTS

Prevention and Health Promotion Administration
Center for Tobacco Prevention and Control

Menthol Tobacco Inequities Spring, 2024

MENTHOL TOBACCO

WHAT IS MENTHOL?



- Menthol is a natural chemical in peppermint and other plants, but can also be produced in a lab.¹
- Menthol can change the way one registers taste and pain.¹
- In cigarettes, menthol creates a cooling sensation, making the smoke feel less harsh and easier to inhale.¹

EXAMPLE MENTHOL CIGARETTES

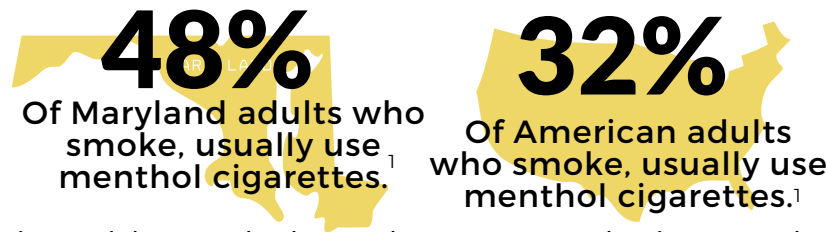


- Marlboro: Black Menthol, Smooth Ice, and Bold Ice.
- Camel: Crush Smooth and Crush Rich.
- Newport: Smooth, Boost, and Boost Gold.

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MENTHOL TOBACCO USE IN MARYLAND

THE PUBLIC HEALTH PROBLEM



- Tobacco companies add menthol to tobacco to make it seem less harsh and more appealing to youth and new users.¹
- Menthol enhances the effects of nicotine.¹
- Menthol can make tobacco products easier to start, more addictive, and harder to quit.¹

HEALTH DISPARITIES

- The tobacco industry aggressively markets menthol cigarettes to select populations (Black Americans, youth, and women). This leads to menthol tobacco use disparities in the targeted groups.²



40% of White, Non-Hispanic Maryland adult tobacco users, use menthol tobacco.³



91% of Black, Non-Hispanic Maryland adult tobacco users, use menthol tobacco.³

Maryland youth who identify as gay or lesbian are

2X

as likely to use flavored tobacco products compared to their heterosexual counterparts.⁴

CDC ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES TO BANNING MENTHOL IN MARYLAND

If menthol cigarettes were no longer available,

~15,700

additional adults in Maryland who smoke would quit smoking.¹

If menthol cigarettes were no longer available,

~6,100

additional non-Hispanic Black adults in Maryland who smoke would quit smoking.¹

As of February, 2024,

0

localities in Maryland prohibit the sale of menthol cigarettes and other flavored tobacco products.¹

Sources:

1. Menthol Fact Sheets | Smoking & Tobacco Use | CDC. 28 Nov. 2023. www.cdc.gov/tobacco/basic_information/menthol/state-menthol-fact-sheets.html#print. Accessed 8 Feb. 2024.
2. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Menthol Smoking and Related Health Disparities, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, accessed on 1 September 2022 at https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/basic_information/menthol/related-health-disparities.html.
3. Health, D. of (n.d.) Dataset query system. IBIS. <https://ibis.health.maryland.gov/ibisph-view/query/selection/brfss/BRFSSSelection.html>
4. 2021 Youth Risk Behaviors Survey/Youth Tobacco Survey (YRBS/YTS)

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MENTHOL TOBACCO MESSAGEING

There has been an increase of menthol tobacco news recently due to the pending FDA decision on a national menthol ban and menthol tobacco ban legislation many states are considering. Learn more about menthol tobacco messaging:

[Click here to watch a video on racial equity and menthol tobacco.](#)



- [Attorney General Brown: 'Urges Biden Administration to Implements Ban on Menthol Cigarettes and Flavored Cigars'](#)
- [CDC's '2024 Tips from Former Smokers Campaign'](#)
- [African American Tobacco Control Leadership Council's 'Menthol Funeral'](#)
- [Truth Initiative's article on 'Why ending menthol cigarette sales would benefit disproportionately affected groups'](#)
- [Washington Post's Editorial on 'Save Black Lives. Ban Menthol.'](#)
- [Mayor Johnson: 'Black Communities have been burned by marketing of menthol cigarettes'](#)

UPCOMING OBSERVANCES RELEVANT TO TOBACCO

Click on the observance for more information

- [Celebrate Diversity Month \(April\)](#)
- [National Minority Health Month \(April\)](#)
- [Take Down Tobacco Day \(April\)](#)
- [National Public Health Week \(April\)](#)
- [Air Quality Awareness Week \(April\)](#)
- [Mental Health Month \(May\)](#)
- [Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month \(May\)](#)
- [No Menthol Sunday \(May\)](#)
- [World No Tobacco Day \(May\)](#)
- [Juneteenth \(June\)](#)
- [Pride Month \(June\)](#)
- [National Cancer Survivors' Day \(June\)](#)
- [Caribbean American Heritage Month \(June\)](#)



No Menthol Sunday
Rooted in Power

RESOURCES TO HELP QUIT TOBACCO/NICOTINE AND LIVE TOBACCO-FREE

 [Click here](#) for **prevention and education** resources to share with youth, parents, teachers, school administrators, and healthcare providers

1-800-QUIT-NOW (1-800-784-8669)

- o FREE phone, web, and text message service.
- o Specific programs to support behavioral health, youth, and pregnant individuals.
- o Offered in Spanish and uses the language line to support multiple other languages.

Maryland's
1-800 QUIT NOW
1.800.784.8669 SmokingStopsHere.com

 Live Vape Free for Teens, **Text VAPEFREE to 873-373**

This material refers to commercial tobacco use (cigarettes, cigars, smokeless tobacco, and electronic smoking devices), not the sacred and traditional use of tobacco by some American Indian cultures.



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