

BACKGROUND

- ❑ The availability of flavored tobacco products is known to be a reason for using non-cigarette tobacco products.^{1,2}
- ❑ Recently, the FDA banned the sale of flavored cartridge-based e-cigarettes, except tobacco or menthol.³
- ❑ Understanding consistencies in flavor preference across products may portend switching to another product with a comparable flavor rather than remaining loyal to the current product.
- ❑ The purpose of this study was to examine inconsistencies in flavor preference with tobacco product use among a nationally representative sample of US adult tobacco users.

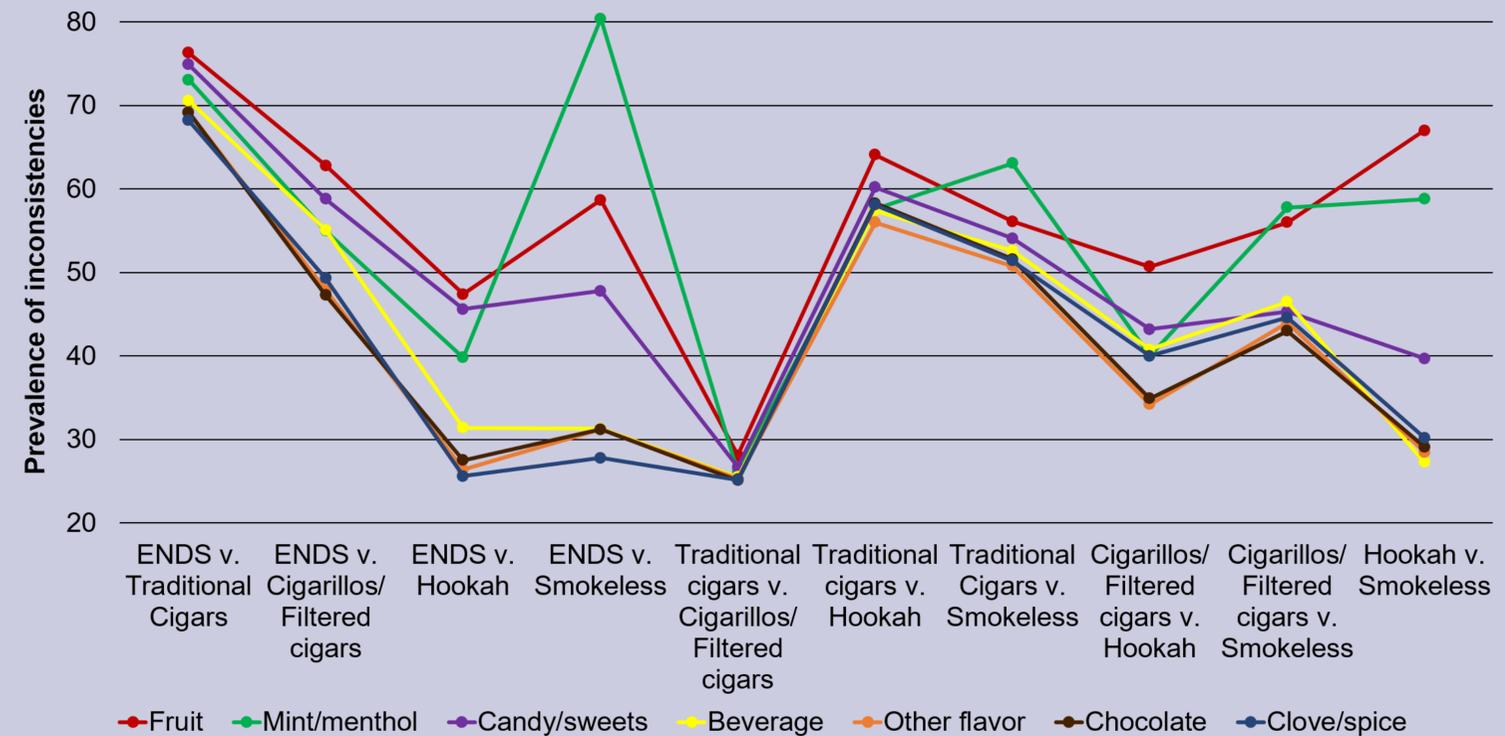
METHODS

- ❑ Data are from Wave 3 of the Population Assessment of Tobacco and Health (PATH) Study, an ongoing nationally representative, longitudinal cohort study of tobacco use and its health effects.
- ❑ Exclusive and poly users of flavored tobacco products, who reported regular flavor category were of interest (N=9,037).
- ❑ Prevalence of regular flavor used alone or in combination for each product was assessed.
- ❑ Prevalence of inconsistencies in reporting of regular flavor between product combinations was assessed among polytobacco users (n=3,183).
- ❑ Analyses were conducted using Stata 16 software with W3 replicate weights and balanced repeated replication methods with Fay's adjustment of 0.3.

RESULTS

- ❑ Among the 9,037 flavored tobacco users, about 69% of users reported only using one product, while the remainder (n=3,183) reported using two or more products.
- ❑ Most users of flavored tobacco products reported using one flavor category per product (67-96%).
- ❑ Fruit flavor was the most common flavor category used alone among ENDS (31.8%) and hookah users (44.2%).
- ❑ Tobacco flavor was the most common flavor used alone among users of traditional cigars (79.9%) and cigarillos/filtered cigars (59.3%).
- ❑ Menthol/mint was the most common flavor used alone and in combination among regular users of smokeless tobacco (53.2% and 90.6%, respectively).
- ❑ Fruit flavor was the most common flavor used in combination among users of ENDS (79.7%), traditional cigars (68.0%), cigarillos/filtered cigars (61.8%), and hookah (93.4%).
- ❑ Polytobacco users of ENDS and traditional cigars had the largest overall inconsistency, where about 68-76% used different flavor categories across products.
- ❑ Polytobacco users of traditional cigars and cigarillos/filtered cigars had the lowest inconsistency (25-28%), followed by ENDS vs. hookah (26-47%).

Figure 1: Inconsistencies in flavor categories between flavored tobacco products among adult polytobacco users only (n=3,183) - The PATH Study Wave 3



NOTE: The prevalence of inconsistencies represents the percent of consumers who report using the flavor category for one of the products but not the other.

CONCLUSIONS

- ❑ Fruit, tobacco, and mint/menthol flavors were among the top individually reported flavor categories, while fruit and mint/menthol were among the most common flavors reported in combination.
- ❑ The finding of significant inconsistencies in flavor preference according to product suggest that consumers of most flavored tobacco products may not switch to another product in order to uphold a flavor preference.
- ❑ More than 30% of participants have used two or more flavored tobacco products fairly regularly at some point in their lifetime.
- ❑ Future research should assess flavor preferences prospectively to better understand the potential benefits of the current partial ban on flavored cartridge-based e-cigarettes, especially among those who have used or currently use multiple tobacco products.

REFERENCES

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3. Food and Drug Administration. FDA finalizes enforcement policy on unauthorized flavored cartridge-based e-cigarettes that appeal to children, including fruit and mint. <https://www.fda.gov/news-events/press-announcements/fda-finalizes-enforcement-policy-unauthorized-flavored-cartridge-based-e-cigarettes-appeal-children>. Published 2020. Accessed January 30, 2020.

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