

# HEALTHY LIVING

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## Teen Smoking: How Parents Can Help Prevent It

*South Nassau Communities Hospital offers tips on how to help prevent teens from smoking*

According to the Surgeon General's 2012 report on "Preventing Tobacco Use Among Youth and Young Adults," each day in the U.S., approximately 3,800 young people under 18 years of age smoke their first cigarette. The overwhelming majority of smokers, experts estimate approximately 90 percent, started smoking before they were 18 years old. About 20 percent of American teens smoke. One-third of smokers who began smoking as teens will die prematurely due to a smoking-related illness.

According to Shahriyoor Andaz, MD, FACS, lung cancer specialist and director of thoracic oncology at South Nassau

Communities Hospital, it is important to proactively try to prevent teen smoking. Nicotine, one of the more than 4,000 chemicals in tobacco, is highly addictive. Among teens who do smoke, three out of four say they keep smoking because it's really hard to quit. A nearly equal number say they wish they had never started smoking.

"Someone who begins smoking as a young adolescent will have a far more difficult time quitting, can have more serious health problems and may die younger than a person who begins to smoke in adulthood. It's important that parents and teachers do everything they can to dis-

suaude teens and help them realize the health dangers and negative effects of smoking," said Dr. Andaz.

"Adolescents and young adults are extremely vulnerable to social and environmental influences promoting the use of tobacco," notes Gina Kearney, RN, South Nassau's director of community education. "Add to that the fact that tobacco companies spend billions of dollars on cigarette and smokeless tobacco advertising and it can be a true challenge for any parent to help their child stay tobacco-free."

Ms. Kearney offers the following prevention tips for parents:

### Be A Good Role Model:

Smoking is more common among teen whose parents smoke. The earlier you can stop smoking, the less likely your teen will become a smoker. A parent who successfully quits also provides an equally strong positive message. It's not only way to show your children how much you care about them, it also demonstrates that you understand the challenge they face.

### Appeal To Your Teen's Vanity:

Since most teens believe they are invincible and will not die from cancer or an-

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## Detergent Pods Look Like Candy, Have Been Eaten By Children

*Schumer urges feds to require child safety caps and warning labels on containers*

U.S. Senator Charles E. Schumer recently called on the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) to put forward regulations that result in child safety caps on the packaging of dishwashing and laundry detergent gel pods that are posing serious risks to young children. The gel pods, which are relatively new to the United States, are small in size and come in a variety of bright colors, making them attractive to children, who confuse them with candy. The gel pods, which contain a single dose of detergent, are particularly dangerous to young children because the detergent is highly concentrated. Schumer also urged the companies to immediately consider offering these products with child-safe caps on their own.

Schumer was joined by Dr. Maida P. Galvez of the Mount Sinai School of Medicine; Dr. Tamara Kuittinen of Lenox Hill Hospital; Daniel Kass, deputy commissioner of NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene; and Chuck Bell of the Consumer's Union.

"These pods were supposed to make household chores easier, not tempt our

children to swallow harmful chemicals," said Schumer. "The common sense solution to this problem is for manufacturers to make the product less colorful, and for them to use child-safe caps on the dispensers. Child-safe caps are commonly used on prescription drug bottles, and there is no reason in the world that those protections can't be used on another product that can be equally dangerous."

The problem of children consuming these pods, meant for the washing machines or dishwashers, is growing as the products gain popularity in the United States, and the symptoms are severe. The effects of ingesting gel pods include vomiting, dizziness, drowsiness, trouble breathing, and a number of children have been hospitalized. According to the Consumer Products Safety Commission, these packets pose more serious problems when ingested than liquid or powder detergent. Young children can suffer from serious eye damage when the gel pod bursts open and 11 children have been placed on ventilators.

In May, 200 cases had been reported to poison control centers nationwide. That skyrocketed to 1,210 by the end of June.

In April, May and June alone, 40 cases have been reported in New York City and a dozen have been reported on Long Island. According to the American Association of Poison Control Centers, there have been 2,950 cases nationwide of children aged 5 and younger swallowing these detergent gel pods.

Schumer is asking for the commission to consider implementing both voluntary and mandatory child-resistant packaging on gel pods, like those found on prescription drug bottles, as well as more prominent warning labels. Schumer said the agency should immediately put forward safety standards that manufacturers can adhere to, and begin the sometimes lengthy process that will ultimately result in such child-resistant packaging being required. In Europe, where the pods have been on the market for years and have caused many more injuries, doctors are sounding the alarm, warning parents not to purchase the product. A paper published this month in the Archives of Diseases in Childhood outlined the growing scope of the problem, saying "Dishwasher and washing machine liquid tabs are now a

common finding in most homes, but unfortunately seem very attractive to young children."

Dishwashing and detergent gel pods are designed to make household chore easier by reducing spills and eliminating uncertainty. Due to their convenience these products are becoming more and more popular in households in New York and across the country. As they have grown more popular, reports have shown that a growing number of young children are swallowing the gel pods because of their bite-size packaging, bright color and candy jar-like container.

After skyrocketing reports of children ingesting the detergent gel pods, Procter and Gamble announced in May that they would be implementing a new double latch lid for the Tide Pods containers making it much more difficult for children to open the packaging. Schumer noted that the Tide company should be applauded for their efforts and concern about this ongoing problem however, it is clear that these gel pods are still getting into the hands of young children and more need to be done.

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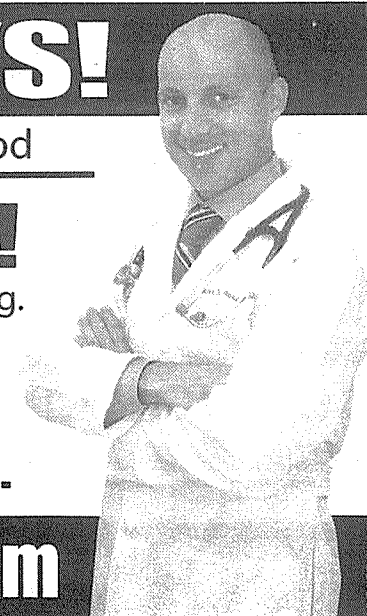
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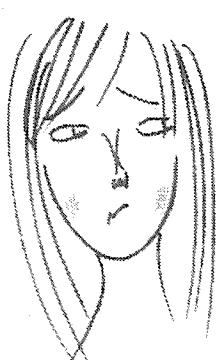
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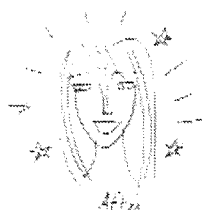
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## Teen Smoking (continued from page 16A)

other disease associated with tobacco use, parents should appeal to a teen's vanity. Reminding them that smoking makes their clothes, hair and breath smell bad and that it can also turn their teeth yellow and cause wrinkles can be extremely effective.

### Talk Dollar And Cents:

Teens are big consumers and generally enjoy buying clothes or electronic gadgets with whatever money they have. Explaining the current high cost of tobacco products and the effect it will have on their purchasing power can be a reality check. Do a simple math problem - if the cost of cigarettes is \$10 a pack and if you smoke a pack a day, how much money will you spend in a year? In 10 years?

### Discuss The Glamorization Of Smoking:

When you see actors smoking in TV or movies, or see ads featuring adults smoking, discuss it with your teenager. Make sure they understand that advertising and other media depictions are not real and are misleading. The majority of actors who smoke in movies are nonsmokers off the screen. Smoking does not add reality to the film - it generates revenue for the film industry.

### Become An Expert On Smoking:

Making the case against smoking isn't hard, but having a full grasp of all the facts and using them in ways that are relevant to your child is important. For example, discussing how smoking affects a young smoker versus the health effects on older smokers is more relevant.

### Be A Supporter And Sounding Board:

Lecturing and ultimatums do not work. Empathy and understanding are the best options. It's unlikely that your teen will find peers who will quit with them or whom they can even discuss quitting.

"Parents are the single biggest influence in the lives of their children and it's not too early to start warning your child against smoking and other forms of tobacco use. It's important to get into the habit of talking openly with your children when they are younger. Eight percent of middle school students are already cigarette smokers," Dr. Andaz concludes.

For more information, educational and preventive assistance, Ms. Kearney recommends:

- The US Department of Health and Human Services, National Cancer Institute's "Quit Now TXT Program" <http://teen.smokefree.gov> (a mobile phone, 24/7 assistance for quitting and social media pages, "a must for teens truly speaks their language in a way that is comfortable communicating," Ms. Kearney);

- [www.notobacco.org](http://www.notobacco.org)
- [www.tobaccofree.org](http://www.tobaccofree.org)
- [www.cdc.gov/tobacco/tips4youth](http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/tips4youth)
- [www.fda.gov/tobaccoproductresourcesforyou](http://www.fda.gov/tobaccoproductresourcesforyou)

- American Lung Association's smoking cessation program Freedom From Smoking, <http://ffsonline.org>

- NY Smoker's Quitline: [www.nysmokersquitline.com](http://www.nysmokersquitline.com) - 1-866-697-8487

In addition, South Nassau periodically offers smoking cessation classes. For more information, contact the Department of Community Education at (516) 377-5333.

## Experience Matters



Pictured Left to right: Jean Rose Castiglione, RN, Mary Kochaniwsky, RN, LNHA, Susan Schonmann, RN, BSN and Nancy Ciaffone, RN, MSN, NP-C, GN-C

### Meet Daleview's Nursing Management Team

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And, there's more. Nancy Ciaffone, RN, Daleview's Director of Nursing, is also a Certified Nurse Practitioner and Certified Geriatric Nurse. Mary Kochaniwsky, our Administrator, has been a Registered Nurse since 1975. She became a Licensed Nursing Home

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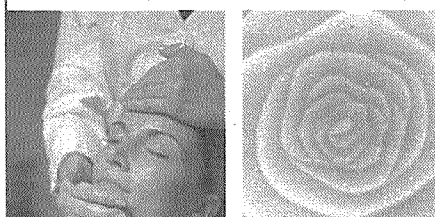
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