

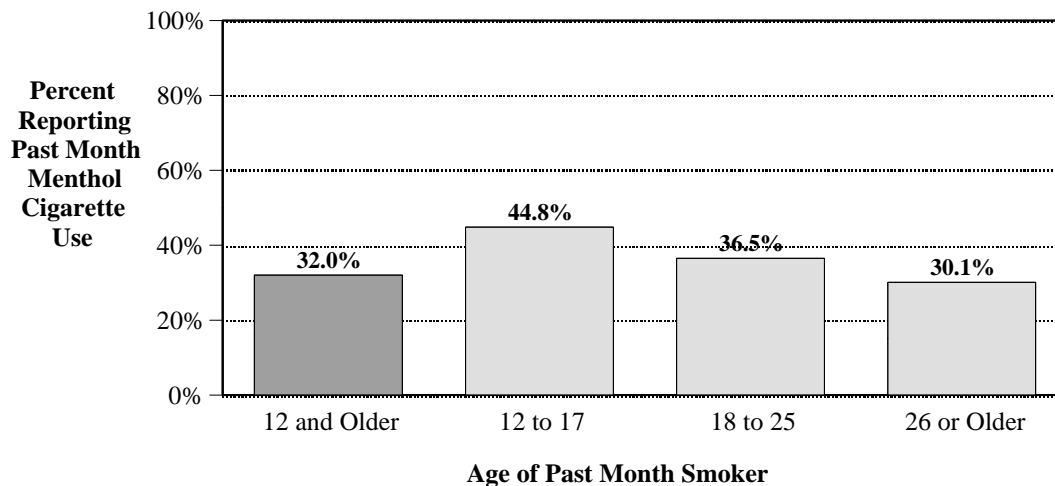
A Weekly FAX from the Center for Substance Abuse Research

University of Maryland, College Park

Nearly One-Third of Current U.S. Smokers Smoked Menthol Cigarettes in the Past Month

Nearly one-third (32%) of current smokers reported that they smoked menthol cigarettes in the past month, according to combined data from the 2004 to 2008 National Surveys on Drug Use and Health. Younger smokers were more likely to report using menthol cigarettes—44.8% of smokers ages 12 to 17 reported such use, compared to 36.5% of young adults ages 18 to 25 and 30.1% of adults ages 26 or older (see figure below). Use of menthol cigarettes in the past month was also more likely among smokers who had first started smoking in the past 12 months than among longer term smokers (44.6% vs. 31.8%; data not shown). The authors suggest that prevention specialists “may wish to consider prevention strategies for adolescents that are more targeted at the initiation of menthol cigarette use and the attractions of a ‘cooler’ taste” (p. 5). The Family Smoking Prevention and Tobacco Control Act enacted earlier this year (see *CESAR FAX*, Volume 18, Issue 25) bans all cigarette flavorings except menthol and requests research on the impact of the use of menthol in cigarettes on the public health.

Percentage of Current U.S. Smokers Ages 12 and Older Reporting Smoking Menthol Cigarettes in the Past Month, 2004 to 2008 Data Combined



NOTE: The combined 2004 to 2008 data are based on information obtained from 340,476 persons aged 12 or older. Current smokers are those who reported smoking part or all of at least one cigarette in the past 30 days.

SOURCE: Adapted by CESAR from Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), Use of Menthol Cigarettes, The NSDUH Report, November 19, 2009. Available online at <http://www.oas.samhsa.gov/2k9/134/134MentholCigarettes.cfm>.

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