



MEDIA RELEASE

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For immediate release

Alberta Blue Cross® and Alberta Lung are joining together on 2024 World No Tobacco Day, which is May 31, to call more attention to the dangers of youth vaping.

"Since the introduction of vaping products, we know that vaping among Alberta youth rose to 35 per cent in 2020 from 19 per cent seven years earlier—and is likely still on the rise," says Brian Geislinger, senior vice-president of Corporate Relations and Community Engagement with Alberta Blue Cross. "Both parents and youths need to be more aware of the serious risks and lifelong harm that come with vaping."

For the past 4 years, Alberta Blue Cross has sponsored Alberta Lung's Breathe Smart Education Program that delivers lung-health workshops at schools across Alberta—focused on e-cigarettes and vaping as a growing and concerning trend among youth.

"These workshops are a reality check for a lot of youth, especially when they learn the consequences of vaping which can include permanent lung damage, chemical poisoning and nicotine addiction," says Geislinger.

According to Statistic Canada's [2022 Canadian Tobacco and Nicotine Survey](#), in 2022, 30 per cent of youth aged 15 to 19 years and nearly half (48 per cent) of young adults aged 20 to 24 years reported having tried vaping in their lifetime. The rate of Albertan youth trying e-cigarettes has exceeded the national average since 2019.

"Since 2019, Alberta Lung has reached more than 20,000 Albertan students and the public to educate and provide tools to make lung-healthy decisions like not using commercial tobacco and e-cigarettes or vapes," says Nina Snyder, chief operating officer of Alberta Lung. "Vaping harms are very real and with Alberta Blue Cross's support, we help dispel myths as there is data demonstrating real health risks to vaping despite a lack of long-term research."

Snyder says both teachers and students alike have commented on their positive experience with the Breathe Smart program and appreciate the science-based information, which also includes a real-lung demonstration.

As a champion for wellness for Albertans, Alberta Blue Cross is a long-standing advocate for tobacco reduction. The organization is a member of the Campaign for a Smoke-Free Alberta, is a founding sponsor of the Keep Tobacco Sacred Collaboration, administers the AlbertaQuits program on behalf of Alberta Health Services and provide supports for tobacco cessation through many of its benefit plan offerings.

Tobacco use is the leading cause of preventable death in Alberta, and more than 4,000 Albertans die from tobacco use each year¹.



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About [Alberta Blue Cross](#)

As the largest provider of health benefits in Alberta, we believe we have the potential and responsibility to impact people's lives for the better. We believe all communities should thrive, and we are committed to serving as a champion for wellness by promoting the health of Albertans.

About [Alberta Lung](#)

Alberta Lung believes that saving lungs saves lives, especially for the 1 in 5 Albertans and their families affected by lung disease. Since 1939, Alberta Lung has championed lung health in Alberta by supporting patients, research, advocacy and education.

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¹ [AHS offers resources to help Albertans quit tobacco | Alberta Health Services](#)