

# Menthol Tobacco Products

## Menthol Cigarettes vs. Non-Menthol Cigarettes

Menthol is a chemical found naturally in mint plants or sometimes made in a lab. Menthol has a cool, minty taste and smell compared to harsher non-menthol cigarettes, which makes it more appealing.

**Both types have nicotine and cancer-causing chemicals and lead to addiction.**

## Why Menthol?

Tobacco companies use menthol commercial tobacco products to attract new, life-long customers.

## Advertising for Menthol Cigarettes

Menthol cigarettes have historically been advertised as **“fresh,” “cool,”** and **“smooth.”** Menthol cigarettes are aggressively advertised in Black communities, and especially to Black youth. Tobacco companies target Black communities to find new and lifelong customers.

### The Results:

- 93% of Black adults who smoke started with menthol cigarettes.

## Excluded from Bans

Flavored cigarettes were banned, but tobacco companies fought to keep menthol on the market. Menthol cigarettes are most popular with groups who have been marginalized.

Excluding menthol from tobacco policies creates health inequities. Health inequity is when some groups have worse health because of unfair treatment.

## Popular and Hard to Quit

- Even though commercial tobacco use has dropped, menthol cigarette smoking has stayed the same.
- People who smoke menthol cigarettes try more times to quit, with less success.

Menthol  
Tobacco  
Products

