



**Put an end to
tobacco industry
gimmicks.**

change the rules

**Ban flavoured and other
new tobacco products.**

www.smoke-free.ca

Flavoured tobacco products and other novelties: New tricks and games to sell addiction

New tricks to addict young people

Tobacco companies may say that they launch new products and brands because smokers want new cigarettes, but the real reason is because they want new smokers. Tobacco companies need “new starters” to replace former smokers (who have quit or died). They use new products to renew their marketing and to target a new generation of smokers.

Although public health campaigns and restrictions on their advertising have made it harder for tobacco companies to convince people to start smoking, there are no laws yet to prevent them from developing and marketing increasingly attractive and deceptive products. Loopholes in Canadian laws have allowed the companies to make their products attractive to young Canadians through the use of flavourings, packaging, exotic names and deceptive imagery.

Yummy flavours

A few years ago, the only flavoured tobacco products on the market were menthol cigarettes and a few plain looking little cigars. Today, a whole variety of tobacco products (chew, bidis, narghile, rolling papers, snuff and small cigars) come in a wide selection of candy flavours (strawberry, peach, vanilla, mint and bubblegum), fun flavours (tropical passion, peanut butter and jelly, appletini, banana split) and even with names evoking drugs TRIP, Purple Haze, etc.).

Fun and exotic flavours lure kids into smoking because they generate curiosity, promote trial and make the first tobacco experience more palatable.¹



Playful packaging

New tobacco packages look like lip-gloss, colour markers, candy and other products children frequently use and buy. Cigarillos are sold in mini packages at prices that children can afford (about the price of a bag of chips). Manufacturers encourage retailers to carry these products to boost “impulse sales” and they are available in virtually all convenience and corner stores across Canada.

In 2007, Health Canada reported that nearly one-third (31%) of youth and close to half (46%) of all young adults had tried cigarillos, even though very few adults had.² These products have as much or more nicotine as cigarettes and are just as likely to trap young people into a lifelong and deadly addiction to smoking.

Many of Canada’s leading cigarette brands are now sold in packs that imitate Blackberrys, cell phone and mp3 players. Manufacturers toy with the appearance and shape of packs, and have even sold “limited edition collectible” series.

Making tobacco products look like innocuous everyday objects trivialises the harms associated with tobacco-use. In addition, health warnings were initially developed to fit on traditional cigarette pack, not on the new shapes and sizes that the industry is turning.

When packages for cigarette and other tobacco products look like trendy and familiar objects, it makes smoking and tobacco products seem contemporary and socially desirable.



Cigarette pack

iPod



“Slide Pack”

New and improved camouflaging

Most public health campaigns have focused on cigarettes. **So when the tobacco industry markets new products, young people and smokers often think that these new lesser known products are somehow different and “better” than traditional cigarettes.** Cigarette manufacturers exploit smoker’s false perception by including messages on the label like “less smoke smell”, “100% natural”, “sun dried”, “vitamin C” and “biofiltra.ca technology”. Such terms make these cigarettes seem less harmful. Tobacco manufacturers can no longer use the terms ‘light’ or ‘mild’ and so they have launched new brands with words like “smooth” and “silver” that continue to confuse and mislead smokers into thinking they are less harmful. In each case, new product design and labelling undermines health campaigns and regulations.

It’s time to change the rules!

Governments must stop playing catch up with the industry’s never-ending ability to rejuvenate and renew its deadly products. We need laws to prevent companies from finding more and more inventive ways to attract young people. **New rules should ban all flavours, as well as all new tobacco products** — unless authorities decide otherwise. This is by far the most effective way to thwart the tobacco industry’s pervasive drive to invent new ways of attracting new consumers.

¹ World Health Organization, 2007. The scientific basis for tobacco product regulation.

² Health Canada, 2008. Canadian Tobacco Use Monitoring Survey (CTUMS February – June 2007).