Many people choose menthol cigarettes because they believe they are safer than non-menthol cigarettes. They are not.

The tobacco industry has marketed menthol cigarettes as healthier and safer, but they are just as deadly.

Many people choose menthol cigarettes because they believe they are safer than non-menthol cigarettes. They are not.

Easier to start, harder to quit.

Tobacco companies add menthol to tobacco products to cool the throat and make them taste better.

African Americans: 88% of African American adults who smoke use menthol, compared to 25% of adult smokers overall.

High School Students: 34% of Minnesota middle and high school students who smoke use menthol.

LGBTQ Youth & Adults: 70% of LGBTQ youth smokers smoke menthols.

36% of adult LGBTQ smokers smoke menthol cigarettes.

Menthol cigarettes cause cancer, heart and lung diseases, and death. Tobacco use, including menthol-flavored products, is still the No. 1 preventable cause of death in Minnesota.

Studies have shown that the tobacco industry has manipulated menthol levels to broaden youth appeal.
The tobacco industry has a long history of targeting the African American community, women, LGBTQ, and youth with menthol tobacco marketing.

**INDUSTRY MANIPULATION:**

Tobacco companies began heavily targeting African Americans with menthol cigarettes in the 1960s.

Brands such as Salem and Newport would give out free packs of menthol cigarettes from vans.

Tobacco industry documents show these vans targeted young, lower-income, black smokers at “retail outlets, currency exchanges/check cashing stations, public aid offices, large housing complexes, shopping malls, rapid transit locations, busy street corners, and nightclubs/bars.”

— RJ Reynolds, 1989

**TAKE ACTION**

What can we do to stop the tobacco industry from harming our communities with menthol tobacco?

Minnesota communities have the authority to regulate the sale of menthol tobacco products, a move that helps protect youth from a lifetime of tobacco addiction. Minneapolis and Saint Paul were the first cities in Minnesota to prohibit the sale of all flavored tobacco products, including menthol, in any store that allows children to enter. Eight other Minnesota communities have since taken similar action. Other cities across the state are considering regulating the sale of flavored and menthol tobacco in order to protect youth and other populations targeted by the tobacco industry.

**References available at:**
BeautifulLieUglyTruth.org

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