



About E-Cigarettes

What is an e-cigarette?

Electronic cigarettes are battery-powered devices that heat a liquid solution, often containing nicotine, into a vapor to be inhaled. You may hear using e-cigarettes called “vaping,” rather than smoking.

Electronic cigarettes, also called “e-cigarettes” or “e-cigs,” come in a variety of sizes and designs. Some e-cigarettes are sold with cartridges containing a liquid while others are designed so the user can add a solution that is bought separately. The solution typically contains vegetable glycerin or propylene glycol, flavorings and other additives as well as nicotine.



Some people mistakenly believe the aerosol is just water vapor.

This is not true.

How do they work?

E-cigarettes have a heating element called an atomizer which can be powered by a replaceable battery or charged from a computer or electrical outlet. When the atomizer is on, it heats the solution into an aerosol or vapor. The vapor is inhaled and exhaled to simulate the experience of smoking.

Are e-cigarettes safe to use?

Some e-cigarette manufacturers claim that e-cigarettes are a safe alternative to tobacco cigarettes. However, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has questioned the safety of these products. Researchers have found that some e-cigarettes have nicotine amounts that are very different than noted on the label.

Some chemicals used for flavoring or other additives have been shown to be highly toxic. In addition, the long-term health effects of inhaling vegetable glycerin, propylene glycol and other additives are not known. In addition to the FDA, many health care organizations, including the American Heart Association and the American Cancer Society, have issued warnings about the potential health risks of e-cigarettes.

To answer the question: *E-cigarettes are not approved by the FDA and there is no scientific evidence that they are safe to use.*

What does it mean to be “regulated”? Are e-cigarettes regulated?

When products are regulated, that means the FDA can monitor how they are manufactured, how they are sold and how they are marketed. No, e-cigarettes are not regulated.

In the absence of regulation, both the nicotine solutions and e-cigarettes can vary widely from one manufacturer to another with virtually no quality control or standardization.

✘ *Because you see e-cigarettes advertised on television, do not assume they are safe to use.* E-cigarette manufacturers are able to advertise on TV because e-cigarettes are not regulated. Efforts are underway to regulate them, but it may be a long time before this happens.

If you want to stop smoking, call the National Tobacco Quitline at 1-800-Quit NOW.

If I use e-cigarettes, how does this affect those around me?

Some research shows that exhaled vapor of an e-cigarette contains particles that may be toxic to others. Since there is no standard way e-cigarettes are made, it is hard to know for certain. Using e-cigarettes may cause nicotine addiction by itself and may lead to smoking tobacco products.

In addition to the health effects of using e-cigarettes, there is the effect on society as a whole. When people see others regularly using a product, either in person or in advertising, research has shown that people tend to believe that doing this action is OK or safe.

Over the last 30 years, the number of people who smoke has decreased. However, health care providers are concerned that e-cigarettes could counter that decrease by making nicotine use seem normal. This could lead to increased nicotine addiction, especially among teens and young adults. The use of e-cigarettes by teens and young adults has increased dramatically each year since 2009.

Will e-cigarettes help me quit smoking?

Your health care provider does not recommend e-cigarettes as an alternative to tobacco cigarettes or to help you quit.

Studies to determine how effective e-cigarettes are in helping people quit smoking have had inconsistent results. At best, they have not found that e-cigarettes are any more effective than nicotine replacement medications in helping people stop smoking.

There are proven ways to help people stop smoking, including seven FDA-approved medications that are safe and effective. The combined approach of using medication and counseling has been proven to work best.

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