



ELECTRONIC CIGARETTES: What You Need to Know

What are electronic cigarettes?

Electronic cigarettes (also called e-cigarettes or e-cigs) are battery-powered devices. They use cartridges filled with a liquid that contains nicotine, flavoring, and other chemicals. This liquid is heated by the e-cigarette. It turns into a vapor that can be inhaled.

Using an e-cigarette is called “vaping.” Other devices used for vaping include e-hookahs, e-cigars, e-pipes, shisha, and vape pens.

Are e-cigarettes safe?

E-cigarettes don’t burn tobacco, so the vapor they create doesn’t contain some of the harmful substances that smoke from a regular cigarette does (for example, tar and carbon monoxide). While we don’t know for certain, e-cigarettes may be less dangerous than regular cigarettes. However, they should not be considered safe or an alternative to regular cigarettes. The safety of e-cigarettes hasn’t been fully studied, so we don’t know the long-term health risks that vaping can cause. However, we do know that nicotine in e-cigarettes is addictive, just like it is in regular cigarettes.

E-cigarettes went unregulated since being introduced in the U.S. nearly 10 years ago. However, as of August 2016, e-cigarettes are now regulated by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA). This shift in policy allows the FDA to evaluate the ingredients of these products and restrict their sale to person under 18 years.

Risks of e-cigarettes for children and teens

- Companies are allowed to make advertisements for e-cigarettes that appeal to young people.
- The flavorings in e-cigarettes (for example, grape, bubble gum, chocolate, and peppermint) appeal to children and teens.
- In the United States, e-cigarette use by high school students and middle school students is rising rapidly, and is three times higher from 2013 to 2014.
- Poisonings in young children who have swallowed e-cigarette liquid have increased dramatically in the United States.

Can using e-cigarettes help me quit smoking?

Scientific studies have not shown that e-cigarettes work to help people quit smoking. Researchers also don’t know how e-cigarettes compare with FDA-approved products and medications (like nicotine patches or gum) that we know are safe and can help people quit smoking.

In many cases, people who are trying to quit smoking by using e-cigarettes continue to smoke regular cigarettes, too. This is not an effective way to improve your health.

How can I quit smoking?

If you’re thinking about using e-cigarettes to help you quit smoking, talk to your family doctor first. He or she can help you make a plan for quitting and give you helpful information. You’ll have the best chance of quitting smoking if you do the following:

- Get ready.
- Get support and encouragement.
- Learn how to handle stress and the urge to smoke.
- Get medicine and use it correctly.
- Be prepared for relapse.
- Keep trying.

You can also get **free information**
and support by calling
1-800-QUIT-NOW (1-800-784-8669).