

E-Cigarettes

Electronic cigarettes (also called e-cigarettes or electronic nicotine delivery systems) are battery-operated devices designed to deliver nicotine with flavorings and other chemicals to users in vapor instead of smoke. They can be manufactured to resemble traditional tobacco cigarettes, cigars or pipes, or even everyday items like pens or USB memory sticks. Newer devices, such as those with fillable tanks, may look different. More than 250 different e-cigarette brands are currently on the market.

While e-cigarettes are often promoted as safer alternatives to traditional cigarettes, which deliver nicotine by burning tobacco, little is actually known yet about the health risks of using these devices.

How do E-Cigarettes Work?

Most e-cigarettes consist of three components:

- A cartridge, which holds a liquid solution containing varying amounts of nicotine, flavorings, and other chemicals
- A heating device (vaporizer)
- A power source (usually a battery)

In many e-cigarettes, puffing activates the battery-powered heating device, which vaporizes the liquid in the cartridge. The resulting aerosol or vapor is then inhaled (called "vaping").

Can E-Cigarettes Help a Person Quit Smoking?

Some people believe e-cigarette products may help smokers lower nicotine cravings while they are trying to discontinue their tobacco use. However, it is unclear whether e-cigarettes may be effective as smoking-cessation aids. There is also the possibility that they could perpetuate the nicotine addiction and thus interfere with quitting.

Because e-cigarettes are not currently marketed either as tobacco products or as devices having a therapeutic purpose, they are not regulated by the FDA. In addition, there is currently no regulation of the liquids that are used in e-cigarettes. Therefore, there are no accepted measures to confirm purity or safety.

These products have not been thoroughly evaluated in scientific studies. This may change, but for now, very little data exists on the safety of e-cigarettes, and consumers have no way of knowing whether there are any therapeutic benefits or how the health effects compare to conventional cigarettes.

Did you know?

E-cigarettes have not been fully studied, so consumers currently don't know the potential risks of e-cigarettes when used as intended, how much nicotine or other potentially harmful chemicals are being inhaled during use, or whether there are any benefits associated with using these products.

Additionally, it is not known whether e-cigarettes may lead young people to try other tobacco products, including conventional cigarettes.



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