

E-Cigarettes Remain Controversial... And lack the proof of any health benefits.



The new Electronic Cigarette or E-Cigarette. The electronic cigarette turns nicotine, which is highly addictive, and other chemicals into a vapor that is inhaled by the user.

A relatively new product on the market is the electronic cigarette. Here's how they work. Each unit has a cartridge containing nicotine and water, a heating element, and a battery. Most look pretty much like a real filtered cigarette. When you puff on the filter, the element vaporizes the water/nicotine solution and you take that into your lungs. Nicotine delivered to the lungs gets to the brain very quickly. Supposedly these taste like a real cigarette, but have no smoke – only vapor with nicotine. In essence, it is an electronic nicotine delivery system.

The US Food and Drug Administration has not approved e-cigarettes and has reportedly halted many shipments of them from coming into the country since March, 2009. Most of these devices come from manufacturers in Asia.

The FDA says e-cigarettes are "drug-delivery devices," not tobacco products, and is evaluating them on a case-by-case basis.

There was no specific mention of e-cigarettes in the FDA legislation that President Obama recently signed into law. In the meantime, e-cigarettes are being sold in West Virginia and surrounding States, and are unrestricted by the various regulations and smoking bans currently in place.

Smoking bans do not include e-cigarettes because they do not burn tobacco or any other plant. The West Virginia Division of Tobacco Prevention (DTP) does NOT classify these products as a safe alternative to smoking nor do they consider them an approved tobacco cessation tool.


The U.S. Food and Drug Administration announced that a laboratory analysis of electronic cigarette samples has found that they contain carcinogens and toxic chemicals such as diethylene glycol, an ingredient used in antifreeze. Because these products have not been submitted to the FDA for evaluation or approval, at this time the agency has no way of knowing, except for the limited testing it has performed, the levels of nicotine or the amounts or kinds of other chemicals that these products deliver to the user.




E-Cigarettes Remain Controversial...continued

Electronic cigarette
An electronic cigarette gives the user nicotine without the fire, tar, carbon monoxide, ash and stub.

Design styles

KR-808A 

KR-108 

How it works

Light: Simulates a cigarette's glow, indicates when the device is ready for use and works as a battery indicator.


Electronic components: Such as control circuits and a pneumatic airflow sensor

Vaporizer: Atomizes the nicotine smoking liquid in the container.

Nicotine liquid container

Inhaler

Battery



Comparison*

| | ELECTRONIC CIGARETTE | REGULAR CIGARETTE |
|-------------------|--|---|
| Equivalent | 6 cigarettes | 1 cigarette |
| Average puffs | 90 | 15 |
| Nicotine level | 6 to 24 mg | 0.6 to 2.4 mg |
| Nicotine per puff | E-cigarette with 24 mg of nicotine: 0.16 mg per puff | Cigarette with 1.8 mg of nicotine: 0.16 mg per puff |

* Based on smaller e-cigarette models.
Source: E-Cig

McCLATCHY-TRIBUNE | DISPATCH

There are no studies available that disclose what inhaling water vapor with pure nicotine will do to you lungs, heart, or cardio-vascular system. It is well known but not often mentioned fact that nicotine alone is an extremely toxic poison. Not many people realize that nicotine is also sold commercially in the form of a pesticide. Every year, many children go to the emergency room after eating cigarettes or cigarette butts. Sixty milligrams of nicotine (about the amount in three or four cigarettes if all of the nicotine were absorbed) will kill an adult, but consuming only one cigarette's worth of nicotine is enough to make a toddler severely ill.

Liquid nicotine solution, or "e-liquid" for electronic cigarettes is available in a variety of different flavors and nicotine concentrations. Nicotine concentrations range from high doses (to mimic the content of regular cigarettes) to midrange and low doses (that mimic the nicotine content of "light" and "ultralight" cigarettes). Solutions are also available which contain little or no nicotine.

Some flavor varieties attempt to resemble traditional cigarette types, such as regular tobacco and menthol, and some even attempt to mimic specific cigarette brands, such as Marlboro or Camel. Solutions are also available with other flavorings, such as strawberry, orange, mint, vanilla, caramel, coffee. This raise concerns that this might make e-cigs a 'gateway tool' for youth and additional, actual tobacco product use.

Research shows that most who are obtaining these e-cigarettes are smokers looking for an alternative to tobacco without the hazards and harmful side effects. Of course, the companies are stating they are selling only to clients who are of legal smoking age.

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Some companies market electronic cigarettes as a healthier alternative to tobacco smoking. Some are claiming that most of the harmful material produced by the combustion of tobacco in traditional cigarettes is not present in the atomized liquid of e-cigarettes. Some also are marketing them as a way to curtail an addiction to nicotine.

In September 2008, the World Health Organization issued a release proclaiming that it does not consider the electronic cigarette to be a legitimate smoking cessation aid, stating that to its knowledge, "no rigorous, peer-reviewed studies have been conducted showing that the electronic cigarette is a safe and effective nicotine replacement therapy." Studies have shown that when smokers use vaporized nicotine for either supplemental or smoking cessation reasons, the vaporized nicotine produces similarly addictive and psychological effects as cigarettes.

What is known is that there are clinically and scientifically, US FDA approved, and validated ways to help those addicted to tobacco and nicotine to quit. The West Virginia Tobacco Cessation Quitline has been helping people quit tobacco for many years. Quitline services are offered at no-cost to all West Virginia citizens. Services include four counseling sessions, educational materials and a choice of nicotine therapy including patches, gum and lozenges.

For more information about the West Virginia Division of Tobacco Prevention call (304) 558-2939 or toll free at: 1-866-384-5250. Visit the WVDTP online at www.wvdtp.org. To register for tobacco cessation services call the West Virginia Tobacco Cessation Quitline at 1-877-966-8784.

**West Virginia
TOBACCO
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