

Vaping/E-Cigarettes

Questions to Ask Yourself

- Have you ever vaped? Have you vaped even once in the past 30 days?
- How many people in your house vape?
- Do you work in a vape-free environment?
- How many of your friends that you see regularly vape?

Five Vaping Facts You Need to Know (from John Hopkins Medicine)

1: Vaping Is Less Harmful Than Smoking, but It's Still Not Safe

E-cigarettes heat nicotine (extracted from tobacco), flavorings and other chemicals to create an aerosol that you inhale. Regular tobacco cigarettes contain 7,000 chemicals, many of which are toxic. While we don't know exactly what chemicals are in e-cigarettes, Blaha says "there's almost no doubt that they expose you to fewer toxic chemicals than traditional cigarettes."

However, there has also been an outbreak of lung injuries and deaths associated with vaping. As of January 21, 2020, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) confirmed 60 deaths in [patients with e-cigarette, or vaping, product use associated lung injury \(EVALI\)](#).

"These cases appear to predominantly affect people who modify their vaping devices or use black market modified e-liquids. This is especially true for vaping products containing tetrahydrocannabinol (THC)," explains Blaha.

The CDC has identified vitamin E acetate as a chemical of concern among people with EVALI. Vitamin E acetate is a thickening agent often used in THC vaping products, and it was found in all lung fluid samples of EVALI patients examined by the CDC.

The CDC recommends that people:

- Do not use THC-containing e-cigarette, or vaping, products
- Avoid using informal sources, such as friends, family or online dealers to obtain a vaping device.
- Do not modify or add any substances to a vaping device that are not intended by the manufacturer.

2: Research Suggests Vaping Is Bad for Your Heart and Lungs

Nicotine is the primary agent in both regular cigarettes and e-cigarettes, and it is highly addictive. It causes you to crave a smoke and suffer withdrawal symptoms if you ignore the craving. Nicotine is also a toxic substance. It raises your blood pressure and spikes your adrenaline, which increases your heart rate and the likelihood of having a [heart attack](#).

Is vaping bad for you? There are many unknowns about vaping, including what chemicals make up the vapor and how they affect physical health over the long term. "People need to understand that e-cigarettes are potentially dangerous to your health," says Blaha. "Emerging data suggests [links to chronic lung disease and asthma](#), and associations between dual use of e-cigarettes and smoking with [cardiovascular disease](#). You're exposing yourself to all kinds of chemicals that we don't yet understand and that are probably not safe."

3: Electronic Cigarettes Are Just As Addictive As Traditional Ones

Both e-cigarettes and regular cigarettes contain nicotine, which research suggests may be as addictive as heroin and cocaine. What's worse, says Blaha, many e-cigarette users get even more nicotine than they would from a tobacco product — you can buy extra-strength cartridges, which have a higher concentration of nicotine, or you can increase the e-cigarette's voltage to get a greater hit of the substance.

4: Electronic Cigarettes Aren't the Best Smoking Cessation Tool

Although they've been marketed as an aid to help you quit smoking, e-cigarettes have not received Food and Drug Administration approval as smoking cessation devices. A recent study found that most people who intended to use e-cigarettes to kick the nicotine habit ended up continuing to smoke both traditional and e-cigarettes.

In the light of the EVALI outbreak, the CDC advises adults who use e-cigarettes for smoking cessation to weigh the risks and benefits and consider use of [other FDA-approved smoking cessation options](#).

5: A New Generation Is Getting Hooked on Nicotine

Among youth, e-cigarettes are more popular than any traditional tobacco product. In 2015, the U.S. surgeon general reported that e-cigarette use among high school students had increased by 900%, and 40% of young e-cigarette users had never smoked regular tobacco.

According to Blaha, there are three reasons e-cigarettes may be particularly enticing to young people. First, many teens believe that vaping is less harmful than smoking. Second, e-cigarettes have a lower per-use cost than traditional cigarettes. Finally, vape cartridges are often formulated with flavorings such as apple pie and watermelon that appeal to younger users.

Both youths and adults find the lack of smoke appealing. With no smell, e-cigarettes reduce the stigma of smoking.

“What I find most concerning about the rise of vaping is that people who would've never smoked otherwise, especially youth, are taking up the habit,” says Blaha. “It's one thing if you convert from cigarette smoking to vaping. It's quite another thing to start up nicotine use with vaping. And, it often leads to using traditional tobacco products down the road.”

Want to Quit Smoking?

There's a strong link between [smoking and cardiovascular disease](#), and between smoking and cancer. But the sooner you quit, the quicker your body can rebound and repair itself. Talk to your doctor about what smoking cessation program or tools would be best for you.