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## Petition Response: Protecting Public Health Through Safe and Effective Treatments

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To: jxx

Thu, Dec 15, 2011 at 1:27 PM



### Protecting Public Health Through Safe and Effective Treatments

*By Dr. Lawrence R. Deyton, M.S.P.H, M.D., Director of the Center for Tobacco Products at the FDA.*

Thank you for signing the petition "[Recognize electronic cigarettes as an effective alternative to smoking and support job creation in this new industry.](#)"

E-cigarettes may contain ingredients that are known to be toxic to humans or otherwise harm public health -- for example, if they are attractive to young people and lead kids to try other tobacco products, including conventional cigarettes, which are known to cause disease and lead to premature death. Because clinical studies of these products have not been submitted to the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), consumers currently have no way of knowing what types or concentrations of potentially harmful chemicals are found in these products, or how much nicotine people inhale when they use these products.

FDA is taking steps, as authorized by the Family Smoking Prevention and Tobacco Control Act, to include electronic cigarettes under the agency's regulatory authority.

However, in light of the lack of validated scientific data, including a lack of reliable indicators of nicotine and harmful chemical content, FDA cannot at this time conclude that electronic cigarettes are an effective alternative to smoking.

Make no mistake, the Obama Administration shares your concern about the public health risks associated with cigarette smoking and is committed to helping Americans quit. Cigarette smoking poses a serious public health risk to our Nation, accounting for about [one-third of all cancers, including 90 percent of lung cancer cases](#). On average, [adults who smoke die 14 years earlier than nonsmokers](#). Nonsmokers exposed to secondhand smoke at home or work increase their risk of [developing heart disease by 25 to 30 percent and lung cancer by 20 to 30 percent](#). A 35-year-old man who quits smoking will, on average, [increase his life expectancy by 5 years](#).

As someone who is clearly engaged on this issue, we also want to make sure you know about the Great American Smokeout, the American Cancer Society's nationwide campaign to encourage smokers to make a plan to quit. [Watch a special video from President Obama and learn more about it here:](#)



Related links:

- [NIDA InfoFacts: Cigarettes and Other Tobacco Products](#)
- [CDC Fact Sheet: Health Effects of Cigarette Smoking](#)
- [CDC Fact Sheet: Secondhand Smoke Causes Heart Disease](#)
- [The Health Benefits of Smoking Cessation: A Report of the Surgeon General. Available](#)
- [Family Smoking Prevention and Tobacco Control and Federal Retirement Reform](#)
- [FDA and Public Health Experts Warn About Electronic Cigarettes](#)

Check out this response on We the People.

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