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# Vapor Product and Electronic Cigarette FAQs

## WHAT IS AN ELECTRONIC CIGARETTE OR VAPOR PRODUCT?

An e-cigarette is a device that uses a battery and a heating element (atomizer) to aerosolize a liquid (e-liquid) for inhalation. E-liquids may contain a specific concentration of nicotine, or none at all, based on a person's preference. Devices are sometimes referred to as "electronic cigarettes" or "e-cigarettes," but the term "vapor products" is increasingly becoming the preferred term. The wide variety of available products allows consumers to customize their experience.

## ARE VAPOR PRODUCTS FOR QUITTING SMOKING?

Vapor products are a low-risk alternative to smoking. While manufacturers are prohibited from marketing e-cigarettes in the U.S. as a smoking cessation product, a significant number of people have reduced or eliminated their smoking habit by using vapor products. In fact, many respected health organizations and recent research conclude that vapor products appear to be effective (twice as effective as nicotine replacement therapy (NRT), according to one study) when used by people who smoke as an aid to quitting smoking.

## WHAT IS IN THE LIQUID?

Most e-liquids consist of a non-toxic liquid base made with propylene glycol and vegetable glycerine. Nicotine is optional, and all e-liquids contain food-grade flavoring ingredients. For more information about ingredient listing, search FDA.gov/home for "tobacco ingredient listing."

## IS IT SAFE?

What we perceive as "safe" is more accurately described as "very low risk." According to the Royal College of Physicians (UK), vaping is not likely to exceed 5% of the risk of smoking. Other experts estimate that vaping poses 98% - 99% less risk than combustible tobacco.

## WHAT ABOUT NICOTINE ADDICTION?

There are varying definitions of "addiction," but the common thread among them all is compulsive use or behavior even when the consequences are harmful to the person using or people close to them. We know that smoking is the most harmful way to deliver nicotine, so encouraging people to switch to smoke-free products is all about reducing the risks associated with combustible tobacco. Breaking the compulsion to smoke is the first step in any quit strategy, which allows people to use their own discretion or set their own goals with regard to how frequently or how much they choose to use nicotine. Making conscious and responsible decisions about when, where, and how to use nicotine (or any other substance/behavior) is not a hallmark of "addiction."

## ISN'T NICOTINE A HARMFUL DRUG?

In general, no. Nicotine is classified as a mild stimulant. As such, it carries the minor risks of all mild stimulants, like caffeine. Some people, like those with chronic heart disease, should avoid using stimulants. Pregnant women should be cautious about using nicotine. But for most healthy adults, the risks of using a mild stimulant like nicotine are low. Nicotine does not cause cancer or significantly contribute to any chronic diseases. The harms associated with smoking come exclusively from inhaling the actual smoke of cigarettes, not the nicotine. In fact, nicotine appears to provide a number of benefits to people who use it. For example, it can stabilize mood and improve short-term memory, and studies have shown it may protect against the onset of Parkinson's disease.

## CAN I VAPE ANYWHERE I WANT?

That depends on the laws of your state and the rules of a workplace or business. Some business may prohibit vaping in their establishment, as is their right. Some states and municipalities prohibit vaping in the same places smoking is banned.

## FIND OUT MORE AT CASAA.ORG

CASAA is The Consumer Advocates for Smoke-free Alternatives Association. CASAA is a non-profit 501(c)(4) organization with an all-volunteer board and a grassroots membership of more than 250,000 individuals from all walks of life. We are a consumer organization, not a trade association. We are dedicated to ensuring the availability of reduced harm alternatives to smoking and to providing people who smoke and non-smokers alike with honest information about those alternatives.

Since CASAA's founding in 2009, we have educated the public and increased awareness about the benefits of reduced harm alternatives to smoking, including e-cigarettes. We also encourage responsible legislative policy designed to improve public health by recognizing that smoke-free nicotine-containing products are inherently far less dangerous than smoking.