

Addressing Misconceptions About New Tobacco Products

Misconceptions	Facts
E-cigarettes	
“E-cigarettes can help you quit smoking.”	E-cigarettes are not an FDA approved cessation device. ¹ There is insufficient evidence to support their use for cessation. ²
“It’s just water vapor.”	E-cigarette vapor contains nicotine, heavy metals, formaldehyde and other cancer-causing chemicals. Many ingredients in e-liquid are dangerous to inhale. ³
“E-cigarettes aren’t tobacco.”	The nicotine found in e-liquid is extracted from tobacco plants. ⁴
“There’s no nicotine in my e-liquid.”	Under current regulations, there is no way to know how much nicotine is actually in your e-liquid. ⁵ E-liquid nicotine levels are often mislabeled and tests have shown that some “nicotine-free” e-liquids contain nicotine. ⁶
“I just vape, I’d never smoke.”	Most e-cigarettes contain nicotine, which is a highly addictive drug that adolescents are especially vulnerable to. ⁷ It is possible to become addicted to nicotine even after just a few uses. Studies show that youth who use e-cigarettes also use conventional cigarettes and other tobacco products. ⁸
Hookah	
“The water in hookah filters out the toxins.”	The water used in hookah does not filter out or remove toxic ingredients in the smoke. Hookah smoke contains large amounts of toxic ingredients including tar, carbon monoxide, and cancer-causing chemicals. ⁹
“Hookah is safer than cigarettes.”	Hookah smoking has many of the same health risks as cigarette smoking. A one hour hookah session exposes users to as much smoke as 100-200 cigarettes. ¹⁰ The burning charcoal used with hookah also increases the health risks. ⁹
Menthol Cigarettes	
“Menthols aren’t as bad for you as regular cigarettes.”	Menthol cigarettes have all of the same health risks as non-menthol cigarettes. They also increase addiction and make it harder to quit smoking. ¹¹
Cigars	
“Cigars aren’t as addictive as cigarettes.”	The tobacco in cigars contains nicotine just like the tobacco in cigarettes. Nicotine is a highly addictive drug, and adolescents may become addicted after just a few uses. ⁸
“Cigars are safer than cigarettes.”	Cigars are not safer than cigarettes. Cigars contain the same addictive, toxic and cancer-causing ingredients found in cigarettes. ¹²
Flavored Tobacco Products	
“Flavored tobacco products are safer than non-flavored tobacco products.”	Flavored tobacco products have all of the same health risks as non-flavored products. They also make it easier to start smoking. ¹³

¹ US Department of Health & Human Services (n.d.). Electronic Cigarettes. Retrieved from <https://betobaccofree.hhs.gov/about-tobacco/Electronic-Cigarettes/>

² Hartmann-Boyce J, McRobbie H, Bullen C, Begh R, Stead LF, Hajek P. Electronic cigarettes for smoking cessation. *Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews* 2016, Issue 9. Art. No.: CD010216.

³ Smith, L., Brar, K., Srinivasan, K., Enja, M. & Lippmann, S. (2016). E-cigarettes: How “safe” are they?. *Journal of Family Practice*, 65(6), 380-385.

⁴ American Lung Association. (2016). E-cigarettes and Lung Health. Retrieved from <http://www.lung.org/stop-smoking/smoking-facts/e-cigarettes-and-lung-health.html>

⁵ U.S. Food & Drug Administration. (2016). The Facts on the FDA’s New Tobacco Rule. Retrieved from <http://www.fda.gov/ForConsumers/ConsumerUpdates/ucm506676.htm>

⁶ Buettner-Schmidt, K., Miller, D. R., & Balasubramanian, N. (2016). Electronic Cigarette Refill Liquids: Child-Resistant Packaging, Nicotine Content, and Sales to Minors. *Journal of Pediatric Nursing*, 31(4), 373-379.

⁷ Minnesota Department of Health. (2015). Health Advisory: Nicotine Risks for Children and Adolescents. Retrieved from: http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/hpcd/tpc/topics/nicotine_docs/2015nic_advisory.pdf

⁸ U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. E-Cigarette Use Among Youth and Young Adults. A Report of the Surgeon General. Atlanta, GA: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Office on Smoking and Health, 2016.

⁹ Aljarrah, K., Ababneh, Z. Q., & Al-Delaimy, W. K. (2009). Perceptions of hookah smoking harmfulness: predictors and characteristics among current hookah users. *Tobacco Induced Diseases*, 5(1), 16.

¹⁰ World Health Organization Study Group on Tobacco Product Regulation. (n.d.). Waterpipe Tobacco Smoking: Health Effects, Research Needs and Recommended Actions by Regulators. Retrieved from http://www.who.int/tobacco/global_interaction/tobreg/Waterpipe%20recommendation_Final.pdf?ua=1

¹¹ Tobacco Products Scientific Advisory Committee. (2011). Menthol cigarettes and public health: Review of the scientific evidence and recommendations. Retrieved from <http://www.fda.gov/downloads/AdvisoryCommittees/Committees-MeetingMaterials/TobaccoProductsScientificAdvisoryCommittee/UCM269697.pdf>

¹² J. Taylor Hays, M.D. (n.d.). Is cigar smoking safer than cigarette smoking?. Retrieved from <http://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/quit-smoking/expert-answers/cigar-smoking/faq-20057787>

¹³ King, B. A., Tynan, M. A., Dube, S. R., & Arrazola, R. (2014). Flavored-Little-Cigar and Flavored-Cigarette Use Among U.S. Middle and High School Students. *Journal of Adolescent Health*, 54(1), 40-46.