

MYTHBUSTERS

The Potential Dangers of E-Cigarettes

Electronic cigarette use (also known as “vaping”) has become increasingly popular among adults and youth alike. These products have gained a reputation for being an allegedly safe alternative to smoking because they contain no tobacco. While it is true that these products do not contain tobacco, we do not know whether or not they are safe. While it could be years before we begin to see and understand the long-term effects of using e-cigarettes, what we do already know about vaping may be very surprising...

MYTH #1

E-CIGS PRODUCE ONLY HARMLESS WATER VAPOR.

FACT

E-CIG VAPOR CONTAINS MUCH MORE THAN WATER AND HEATING AND INHALING THE CHEMICALS IN E-CIGARETTES IS POTENTIALLY DANGEROUS. ALTHOUGH THERE IS NO TOBACCO IN E-CIGS, THERE ARE STILL SOME OF THE SAME CARCINOGENIC CHEMICALS FOUND IN TOBACCO CIGARETTES. BOTH MAINSTREAM AND SECONDHAND E-CIGARETTE AEROSOLS HAVE BEEN FOUND TO CONTAIN TINY PARTICLES OF METALS AND AT LEAST TEN CHEMICALS THAT ARE ON CALIFORNIA'S PROPOSITION 65 LIST OF CHEMICALS KNOWN TO CAUSE CANCER, BIRTH DEFECTS, OR OTHER REPRODUCTIVE HARM.



MYTH #2

E-CIGS ARE A SAFE ALTERNATIVE FOR THOSE TRYING TO QUIT SMOKING.



FACT

THE FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION (FDA) HAS NOT APPROVED E-CIGS AS A SAFE OR EFFECTIVE METHOD TO HELP PEOPLE QUIT SMOKING. SOME E-CIGARETTE COMPANIES HAVE TRIED TO MARKET THEIR PRODUCTS AS A TOOL FOR USERS TO QUIT SMOKING BUT THAT IS NOT THEIR INTENDED PURPOSE AND USE OF THEM IN THIS MANNER IS ILL-ADVISED UNTIL THERE IS MORE RESEARCH AVAILABLE TO SUPPORT SUCH CLAIMS.

MYTH #3

THERE ARE FEDERAL REGULATIONS FOR E-CIGS.

FACT

POLICIES HAVE NOT YET BEEN ADOPTED TO REGULATE THE MARKETING, SALE, DISTRIBUTION, AND LABELING OF E-CIGARETTES. THE FDA HAS PROPOSED E-CIG REGULATION BUT THESE PRODUCTS ARE NOT CURRENTLY REGULATED BY ANY FEDERAL AGENCY. SEVERAL RECOGNIZED AUTHORITIES, SUCH AS THE WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION AND THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF COUNTY AND CITY HEALTH OFFICIALS, HAVE DEVELOPED POSITIONS THAT SUPPORT REGULATION OF THE USE OF E-CIGARETTES FOR PUBLIC HEALTH PROTECTION.



MYTH #4

THE LABELS ON E-CIGS CAN BE TRUSTED AS ACCURATE.



FACT

THERE ARE NO E-CIGARETTE PRODUCT MANUFACTURING OR LABELING STANDARDS; THEREFORE, THE NICOTINE DOSAGE CAN BE MISLEADING TO CONSUMERS, AND CARTRIDGES ARE SUBJECT TO TAMPERING AND LEAKAGE OR ACCIDENTAL INGESTION BY CHILDREN, ALL OF WHICH CAN COMPROMISE PUBLIC SAFETY.

MYTH #5

THE LIQUID IN E-CIG CARTRIDGES (E-JUICE) IS SAFE.

FACT

THE NICOTINE SOLUTION IN E-CIGS IS HIGHLY TOXIC. MANY E-CIGARETTE CARTRIDGES AND E-LIQUID BOTTLES ARE NOT EQUIPPED WITH CHILD RESISTANT CAPS, CREATING AVENUES OF POISONING THROUGH INGESTION AND SKIN OR EYE CONTACT. BETWEEN 2012 AND 2013, CALIFORNIA EXPERIENCED A FIVE-FOLD INCREASE IN E-CIGARETTE POISONINGS INVOLVING CHILDREN 5 AND UNDER. EVEN A SMALL AMOUNT OF E-LIQUID MAY BE LETHAL TO A SMALL CHILD.



Note: Tobacco users should consult with a healthcare provider or pharmacist to identify a clinically and scientifically FDA-approved cessation medication and/or contact the California Smokers' Helpline at 1-800-NO-BUTTS (1-800-662-8887), a free service for all Californians, for help with quitting tobacco products. You may also contact the Placer County Tobacco Prevention Program at (530) 889-7152 for additional guidance.