

DEBATE

Can E-Cigarettes Help You Quit Smoking?

Most researchers and public health professionals agree that e-cigarettes and other vaping devices are less harmful than smoked cigarettes, because they do not contain tobacco, the leading contributor to the majority of negative health effects associated with smoking. When used as a complete replacement, rather than in addition to cigarettes, they are a preferable alternative for smokers who haven't had success with medically proven approaches.

But are they really a good option for smokers who want to cut down or quit smoking? Not necessarily. While a few studies have found that e-cigarettes can help reduce smoking, most show that e-cigarette use does not significantly reduce cigarette use, and several found that people who use e-cigarettes may be *less* likely to successfully quit smoking. This may be because e-cigarette use can perpetuate nicotine addiction. The addictive qualities of smoking involve not just nicotine, but also the behaviors and environmental cues associated with smoking, which e-cigarette use mimics.

What Should Cigarette Smokers Do Who Want to Cut Back or Quit?

Given the limited evidence showing that e-cigarettes are an effective smoking cessation aid and the growing body of evidence regarding their risks, the safest approach is to talk to your doctor about proven and effective cessation techniques.

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has approved a variety of smoking cessation products and determined that they are safe and effective. These include certain prescription medications, as well as over-the-counter nicotine replacement

therapies, such as skin patches, lozenges and gum. E-cigarettes have not been approved by the FDA for smoking cessation.

Learn more about [how to quit smoking](#) or visit Smokefree.org for additional information about research-based methods to quit smoking.

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