# The Problem with E-Cigarettes

Electronic cigarettes look like regular cigarettes, right down to the glowing tip and smoke-like vapor. When smokers puff on them, they deliver a mist of liquid, flavorings, and nicotine. The marketers of e-cigarettes say the ingredients are safe. But research hasn't yet established if that's true.

What studies do tell us is that e-cigarette use is growing rapidly. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, about 1 in 5 adult smokers of traditional cigarettes in the US have also tried e-cigarettes.

Researchers are actively studying the long-term health effects of these devices. In the meantime, there are reasons to be cautious.

- E-cigarettes are not labeled with their ingredients, so the user doesn't know what's in them. The amounts of nicotine and other substances a person gets from each cartridge are also unclear. A study done by the US Food and Drug Administration found cancer-causing substances in half the e-cigarette samples tested. Other impurities were also found, including one sample with diethylene glycol, a toxic ingredient found in antifreeze.
- Studies have shown that e-cigarettes can cause short-term lung changes that are much like those caused by regular cigarettes.
- E-cigarettes can lead to nicotine addiction, especially in young people who may be experimenting with them. They may lead kids to try other tobacco products, which we know cause life-threatening diseases.

Read more about the controversy surrounding electronic cigarettes in the American Cancer Society's ***Expert Voices*** blog.



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