

# Debunking the Myths About E-Cigs



Electronic cigarettes or e-cigarettes are more commonly called e-cigs, vapor pens or hookah pens. Using an e-cigarette is referred to as vaping. Vaping has recently become popular as a supposedly healthy alternative to smoking tobacco cigarettes. Below is a list of myths and facts about e-cigarettes that will help you better understand the potential risks of e-cigarette usage.

**Myth** E-cigs produce only water vapor.

**Fact** Much like the tobacco cigarette, an e-cigarette fluid cartridge contains a cocktail of different chemicals. The typical ingredients include propylene glycol or vegetable glycerin, nicotine, and flavoring. Intake of these chemicals is risky. Propylene glycol has been linked to soft tissue (like lungs, throat and eye) irritation. Vegetable glycerin can cause organ damage. Nicotine is highly addictive and poisonous. It is linked to heart and circulation problems and may damage reproductive and fetal health.

**Myth** E-cigs are a safe alternative product to use for those trying to quit smoking.

**Fact** Although e-cigarettes do seem to contain fewer high-risk chemicals and carcinogens than the thousands in traditional tobacco cigarettes, it does not mean they are safe to use. Many e-cigarette companies try to market their products as a tool for users to quit smoking, but the use of e-cigarettes for this purpose is not recommended. E-cigarettes are no more effective than Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRT) in the form of gum, patch or lozenge. Some users even report that the feeling of vaping is less satisfying than the feeling of smoking, which leads them to smoke more. E-cigs may also carry more health risks than NRT, because users inhale the vapor directly into their lungs, as they would with cigarette smoke. All potential effects of this have not been studied, but it has been linked with multiple isolated cases of pneumonia.

Source: American Cancer Society, [www.cancer.org](http://www.cancer.org)

**Myth** Heating e-cig chemicals to vaporize them is safe.

**Fact** Even though there is no tobacco in e-cigarettes, there are still carcinogenic chemicals (tobacco-specific nitrosamines) that were formerly found only in tobacco products. The effects of these chemicals when heated and inhaled have not been extensively studied, so we cannot be sure what they might do to users.

**Myth** There are regulations for what is put into e-cigs.

**Fact** The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has proposed e-cigarette regulations, but these will likely not affect the market for at least a couple of years. This means that e-cigs are not tested and there are no clear rules concerning what can be put on the labels or in the products. As a result, the content of e-cigarette juice varies substantially and is often different than what is listed on the label.

**Myth** It is safe to smoke e-cigarettes around others.

**Fact** Adverse health effects from secondhand smoke exposure cannot be excluded, because the use of e-cigarettes leads to emissions of fine and ultrafine inhalable liquid particles, nicotine, and cancer-causing substances into indoor air.

Employee Assistance Program  
800-451-1834

**MIIA** MASSACHUSETTS  
BASED  
MEMBER  
DRIVEN