

What is an E-cigarette?

An electronic cigarette (E-cigarette) consists of a battery, an atomizer and a cartridge that contains propylene glycol (PG) or vegetable glycerin (VG), water, flavoring, and optional strengths of nicotine. Some are marketed as “nicotine free” but none of them have been tested to be “nicotine free”.

When the user activates the unit, the battery supplies heat to the atomizer and it vaporizes some of the liquid in the cartridge. The smoker then inhales and exhales this vapour.

They can:

- Look like a regular cigarette
- Give off a vapor instead of smoke like a cigarette
- Contain nicotine and other chemicals such as carcinogens like a cigarette

References:

Health Canada: www.hc-sc.gc.ca

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention:
<http://www.cdc.gov/globalhealth/countries/canada/>

What is known about E-cigarettes?

- Manufacturers claim that electronic cigarettes are a safe alternative to conventional cigarettes.
- Health Canada advises not to purchase or use electronic cigarettes.
- The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has questioned the safety of these products.
- FDA analysis of two popular brands found variable amounts of nicotine and trace of toxic chemicals including known cancer-causing substances (carcinogens).
- There are warnings about potential health risks associated with E-cigarettes but it is not yet a regulated product nor does it have manufacture standards.
- The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reported that E-cigarette use by children has doubled from 2011 and 2012.
- The health effects of E-cigarettes have not been effectively studied and the ingredients have little or no regulation.

Electronic Cigarettes

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Health Canada advises Canadians
not to use electronic cigarettes



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(disponible en français)

Can I use E-cigarettes at HSN as a form of nicotine replacement?

No. They have not been fully evaluated for safety, quality and efficacy by Health Canada.

HSN offers only approved NRT medications such as the patch, gum, lozenge and inhaler to inpatients.

Are E-cigarettes a smoking cessation product?

No. E-cigarettes are not an approved smoking cessation product. No electronic smoking products have yet been authorized for sale in Canada.

Health Canada has authorized the sale of a number of smoking cessation aids, including nicotine gum, nicotine patches, nicotine inhaler, and nicotine lozenges. These items have been tested and proven safe for usage, NOT the electronic cigarette.

At the present time, Health Canada advises Canadians against the purchase or use of E-cigarettes.

What are the chemicals in E-cigarettes that can harm you?

Tests have shown that some E-cigarette liquids have toxins such as antifreeze, also known as propylene glycol. Although propylene glycol is an approved ingredient in cosmetics, flavor-concentrate, sun screen, lotions, shampoos and other similar products, it has not been tested nor proven safe to be heated and inhaled into the lungs.

What are the health effects of E-cigarettes?

No one knows for sure. Very little is actually known about E-cigarettes as few studies have been done. No long-term studies on the health effects have been performed.

For these reasons, there is no proof that the vapour is safe for the person smoking or for those who breathe the second-hand vapour.

Nicotine poisoning is a risk.

Pure nicotine is a poison that can kill. There are no rules for safety labels or childproofing on E-cigarettes or the liquid refill packs. This puts children and pets at risk.



E-cigarettes

Electronic cigarettes, often called E-cigarettes, are battery-operated devices that provide inhaled doses of a vaporized solution of either propylene glycol or vegetable glycerin along with liquid nicotine.

A process referred to as “vaping” creates a vapor cloud that resembles cigarette smoke. Some liquids contain flavoring making them more appealing to users.