



PATIENT & CAREGIVER EDUCATION

Frequently Asked Questions About Electronic Smoking Devices

This information answers frequently asked questions about electronic smoking devices. It also has resources to help people quit smoking.

What are electronic smoking devices?

Electronic smoking devices are battery-powered devices that can look and feel like regular cigarettes. These include:

- Electronic cigarettes (e-cigarettes)
- Vaporizers
- Vape pens
- Juuls
- Hookah pens
- e-pipes

Electronic smoking devices do not burn tobacco like regular cigarettes. Instead, they use pods filled with a liquid that have nicotine, flavorings, and other chemicals. The battery heats up the liquid, turning it into a vapor or mist that you breathe in.

Using electronic smoking devices is also referred to as vaping, vaporizing, juuling, or e-smoking.

Are electronic smoking devices safe to use?

The long-term health risks of electronic smoking devices are not yet known. More research is needed on the safety of electronic smoking devices.

Electronic smoking devices have nicotine and other chemicals, even though they do not fill your lungs with smoke. Vapors in e-cigarettes are made up of water and chemicals. These chemicals can cause breathing problems in some people.

In 2016, the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) set rules around making, selling, and marketing of all tobacco products. These products include electronic smoking devices. There are health warnings on all tobacco products. People younger than 18 cannot buy any type of tobacco product.

Is using a Juul safer than vaping?

No. Using a Juul is not safer than vaping or any other electronic smoking device. Juul can be more harmful than vaping or other devices.

Juul comes with liquid-filled pods in different flavors. These pods have nicotine. The amount of nicotine in 1 Juul pod is the same as in a pack of cigarettes.

The nicotine in a Juul absorbs into your blood stream. Juul vapor is lighter and easier to breathe in. This makes you more likely to breathe in more nicotine for longer periods of time.

Juul pods also have more benzoic acid than other electronic smoking devices. Benzoic acid is known to cause:

- Coughs
- Sore throats
- Abdominal (belly) pain
- Nausea (feeling like you're going to throw up)
- Vomiting (throwing up)

Is using an e-cigarette with Vitamin E acetate safe?

No. Breathing in vitamin E acetate may cause breathing problems. Do not add any substances to electronic smoking devices, even if you buy them from a reliable store. This includes vitamin E acetate.

Can electronic smoking devices help people quit smoking?

Electronic smoking devices are not an FDA-approved method of quitting smoking. We do not know whether electronic smoking devices can help or make it harder for people trying to quit.

Although more research is needed, some people use electronic smoking devices to:

- Reduce the amount of harmful chemicals in regular cigarette smoke.
- Help manage nicotine withdrawal cravings.
- Cut down or quit smoking.
- Keep from starting to smoke again (prevent smoking relapse).

Some people may smoke fewer regular cigarettes if they use electronic smoking devices. This may make them less likely to quit smoking. If you're trying to quit smoking, use safe and proven methods, such as nicotine patches, gum, or lozenges.

Can I use electronic smoking devices in the hospital?

No. Using electronic smoking devices in any MSK facility is not allowed.

How can I quit smoking?

There are many resources available to help you quit smoking, including medications and counseling. MSK has specialists who can help you quit smoking. The program is open to everyone. The Tobacco Treatment Program (TTP) uses different methods to help you quit, including individual and group counseling. The tobacco treatment experts can also give you safe and effective medicine to help resist urges to smoke.

Call 212-610-0507 or go to www.msk.org/tobacco to learn more about our Tobacco Treatment Program.

You can also watch this video:



Please visit www.mskcc.org/pe/tobacco-treatment to watch this video.

Read *Tobacco Treatment Guide: For Patients and Their Families* (www.mskcc.org/pe/tobacco-treatment-guide) to learn more about quitting smoking.

More resources

National Cancer Institute (NCI) Toll-free Quitline

877-448-7848

www.smokefree.gov

American Cancer Society (ACS)

800-227-2345

www.cancer.org/cancer/cancer-causes/tobacco-and-cancer

US Food & Drug Administration

www.fda.gov/tobacco-products/products-ingredients-components/vaporizers-e-cigarettes-and-other-electronic-nicotine-delivery-systems-electronic-smoking-devices

OnCancer: News and Insights from Memorial Sloan Kettering

www.msk.org/blog/are-electronic-cigarettes-safer-use-conventional-cigarettes

If you have questions or concerns, contact your healthcare provider. A member of your care team will answer Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Outside those hours, you can leave a message or talk with another MSK provider. There is always a doctor or nurse on call. If you're not sure how to reach your healthcare provider, call 212-639-2000.

For more resources, visit www.mskcc.org/pe to search our virtual library.

Frequently Asked Questions About Electronic Smoking Devices - Last updated on October 21, 2024

All rights owned and reserved by Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center