



## Consumer Advocates for Smoke-free Alternatives Association

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### Electronic Cigarette FAQs

#### **What is an electronic cigarette?**

A device that uses a small battery and a heater, called an atomizer, to vaporize a nicotine solution for inhalation.

#### **Are electronic cigarettes for quitting smoking?**

Electronic cigarettes are intended as an alternative to smoking tobacco cigarettes. They are not designed to treat nicotine addiction, only provide nicotine in a safer manner. However, many experts agree that switching to electronic cigarettes is almost as good as quitting smoking. Additionally, some people have reportedly used the reduced nicotine levels available to wean themselves off of nicotine altogether and now use 0mg nicotine liquid.

#### **What is in the liquid?**

Most contain propylene glycol (a non-toxic, liquid base), vegetable glycerin, purified water, nicotine and food flavoring.

#### **Is it safe?**

While nothing is 100% safe and further testing needs to be done regarding long-term use, based on the fact that they contain only ingredients already shown to be safe for human consumption and research studies show that they do not contain most of the toxins or levels of carcinogens that are found in tobacco cigarettes, we are reasonably certain they are considerably safer than tobacco cigarette smoking.

The American Association of Public Health Physicians (AAPHP) supports the use of electronic cigarettes as a reduced harm tobacco product. The AAPHP released a statement that electronic cigarettes "could save the lives of 4 million of the 8 million current adult American smokers who will otherwise die of a tobacco-related illness over the next 20 years."

#### **Doesn't nicotine cause cancer?**

Nicotine is an addictive stimulant, similar to caffeine and is not shown to cause cancer. Although nicotine use carries other possible health risks, without the tobacco smoke, it is relatively low risk.

#### **Didn't the FDA say electronic cigarettes are dangerous and banned them?**

In 2009 the FDA was sued by two e-cigarette companies regarding products seized at customs. The FDA tested samples from those two companies and found that one sample had trace amounts of possible cancer-causing nitrosamines. The very low levels of nitrosamines were nearly identical to those found in FDA-approved nicotine products. They also found that one cartridge was contaminated with a non-toxic amount of "diethylene glycol," however, no other contaminated cartridges have been found to date.

Because consumers had reported that switching to e-cigarettes have allowed them to refrain from smoking, the FDA asserted that electronic cigarettes were a nicotine cessation treatment and therefore, unapproved drugs. A federal judge ruled that the FDA was overstepping its authority and gave the opinion that they are a reduced-harm tobacco product. The D.C. Federal Appeals Court subsequently upheld that ruling. The FDA announced in April 2011 its intent to treat e-cigarettes as "novel tobacco products" and - by the regulatory power given to it by the Family Smoking Prevention and Tobacco Control Act of 2009 (FSPTCA) - will announce its deeming regulations sometime in the Spring/Summer of 2013.

#### **Can I use electronic cigarettes anywhere I want?**

That depends on the laws of your state and the establishment. Some business may not allow you to use the devices in their establishment, as is their right. Some states are trying to not only include electronic cigarettes in indoor smoking bans, but ban them altogether. CASAA is fighting these proposed bans.

Find out more at [www.CASAA.org](http://www.CASAA.org)

CASAA is a non-profit organization of concerned volunteers. Our mission is to ensure the availability of effective, affordable and reduced harm alternatives to smoking by increasing public awareness and education; to encourage the testing and development of products to achieve acceptable safety standards and reasonable regulation; and to promote the benefits of reduced harm alternatives.