

# NIH News in Health

A monthly newsletter from the National Institutes of Health, part of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

COVID-19 is an emerging, rapidly evolving situation.

Get the latest public health information from CDC: <https://www.coronavirus.gov>

Get the latest research information from NIH: <https://covid19.nih.gov>

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## Health Capsule

### What Are Electronic Cigarettes?



*Aleksandr Pogudin/iStock/Thinkstock*

Electronic cigarettes are battery powered devices that people use to heat liquid into a vapor that can be inhaled. They're also called e-cigarettes, e-cigs, or vapes.

The inhaled vapor may contain nicotine (the addictive drug in tobacco), flavorings, and toxins—including ones that cause cancer.

The government controls e-cigarettes as tobacco products. This means you must be at least 18 to buy them in the U.S. Despite that, e-cigarettes are more popular among U.S. teens than any other form of tobacco. In 2017, about 1 in 5 twelfth graders reported “vaping” nicotine.

Youth who use nicotine are at risk of long-term health effects. Nicotine affects the development of the brain’s reward system and brain circuits that control attention and learning. Continued use of nicotine can lead to addiction and raise the risk for addiction to other drugs.

Some people believe that e-cigarettes can help them quit smoking tobacco. Researchers are testing whether this may be true. However, nicotine patches and many other FDA-approved quit aids are available now to help people quit smoking.

[Learn more.](#)

## Links

- [Stamp Out Smoking](#)
- [Electronic Cigarettes](#)
- [Tobacco/Nicotine and E-Cigs](#)
- [What We Know About Electronic Cigarettes](#)
- [Know the Real Cost of Tobacco \(HHS\)](#)
- [What's in a Vape \(FDA\)](#)
- [Know the Real Cost Facebook Page \(FDA\)](#)

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