

Should we let vape replace cigarettes in the future?

Should we let vaping replace cigarettes in the future? A view has emerged in recent years, advocating for the replacement of cigarettes with vaping, and I wholeheartedly support this approach.

First and foremost, I endorse the idea that vaping can completely replace cigarettes due to its ability to cater to the diverse needs of users and its greater appeal compared to the monotonous traditional cigarette. Traditional cigarettes provide pleasure to users through a combination of spices and nicotine. However, the nicotine content in cigarettes remains relatively consistent, with an average of about 0.5 mg per cigarette. Moreover, many of the additives in traditional cigarettes become harmful to human health when burned. In contrast, the world of vaping offers a multitude of options, each with a simple oil composition categorized into three main groups:

CBD Vape: Featuring CBD as the active ingredient, CBD vape is proven to be non-addictive and non-hallucinogenic. It promotes better sleep quality and relaxation, making it a suitable choice for those seeking these benefits.

Nicotine Vape: This type of electronic cigarette utilizes nicotine salt as its active ingredient, typically at concentrations of 3 mg/100ml or 6 mg/100ml. Notably, the nicotine content in an entire bottle of vape liquid is comparable to that of a pack of cigarettes, but 100 ml of vape liquid can last for an extended period (often two months or more). High-nicotine vape users may experience nicotine levels similar to those of regular smokers, catering to individuals with a strong nicotine dependence.

Nicotine-Free Vape: Comprising only spices and atomization components, nicotine-free vape offers the same experience as a nebulizer.

Apart from the active ingredients, the other components are straightforward: flavorings, vegetable glycerin, and food-grade propylene glycol — additives found in various food products. The composition of vape liquid is adjustable, providing users with a wide range of choices. Those who prefer a nicotine-free experience can select nicotine-free vape liquid to enjoy the pleasure of puffing, while others desiring nicotine or CBD can opt for the appropriate concentration of liquid. This flexibility allows users to strike a balance between health and enjoyment.

Secondly, the harm associated with electronic smoking is significantly lower than that of traditional cigarettes. Traditional cigarettes pose considerable health risks to users, containing approximately 4,000 chemicals, many of which

are toxic, mutagenic, and carcinogenic. Radioisotopes found in cigarettes are a known cause of lung cancer in smokers. The chemicals in cigarettes cannot be easily eliminated from the body and can enter the bloodstream, leading to various health issues in the heart, liver, stomach, and beyond. Additionally, traditional cigarettes contain radioactive substances like Radium 226 and Lead 210, originating from mineral fertilizers. The presence of radioactive isotopes in the bodies of smokers was observed in the 1960s and 1980s. Burning cigarettes also releases carcinogens such as nitrosamines and benzopyrene.

Moreover, traditional cigarette smoke tends to cling to clothing, affecting public environments through second-hand smoke. In contrast, vaping produces vapor with no adhesive properties, eliminating this problem.

Thirdly, the promotion of vaping over traditional cigarettes can effectively deter young people from trying smoking. In many countries, online purchases of vape are restricted, and unauthorized vendors cannot sell them. Vaping products are only available in brand stores. Traditional cigarettes, on the other hand, are easily accessible, even in newsstands or from strangers. Vaping devices are personal items, making it less likely for non-smokers to use someone else's vaping device. Store clerks often verify the age of customers, ensuring that only adults can make purchases. Furthermore, vaping tends to be more expensive than traditional cigarettes, as it requires an initial investment, making it less accessible to minors who rely on pocket money. Thus, replacing cigarettes with vaping aims to raise the threshold for access to these products. Traditional cigarettes are too affordable and accessible, leading many individuals to experiment with smoking. Making addictive substances readily available to the public is both unhealthy and unwise. Emphasizing vaping's harm rather than promoting it as a harmless alternative encourages responsible usage.

It is important to acknowledge that some individuals, including experts and organizations like the World Health Organization, question the assertion that vaping is less harmful. Long-term data on the health effects of e-cigarettes are lacking due to vaping's relatively short history. While the components of vaping liquids are generally non-toxic, the act of vaporization may introduce toxicity. Additionally, vaping liquids may contain additives for flavor, shelf life extension, and other purposes, which can pose their own set of problems.

Nonetheless, the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine Committee support the idea that, "While there is currently little evidence of long-term effects, vape are not without biological effects in humans, but they are likely to pose significantly less risk to an individual than combustible cigarettes" (Helen, G. S., & Eaton, D. L., 2018, JAMA Internal Medicine, 178(7), 984-986).

Indeed, the lack of long-term research on vaping is a valid concern, but we are well aware of the long-term effects of cigarette smoking, and we should make every effort to avoid them. The harm caused by smoking cigarettes is undeniable, affecting individuals both in the short and long term, resulting in millions of deaths annually. In contrast, there have been no reported cases of deaths directly attributed to e-cigarette use. While we may not have all the answers regarding the long-term effects of vaping, we do have extensive knowledge of the profound and detrimental health effects of smoking cigarettes. Given this knowledge, our focus should be on minimizing harm. Cigarettes must either be prohibited or replaced with a less harmful alternative. While an immediate ban on cigarettes is not feasible, vaping can serve as a milder substitute. While we may not yet fully understand the long-term effects of vaping, we should strive to minimize the known harms associated with cigarette smoking. It is imperative that we invest in further research on vaping while promoting it as a safer alternative to cigarettes.

Reference

Helen, G. S., & Eaton, D. L. (2018). Public health consequences of e-cigarette use. *JAMA internal medicine*, 178(7), 984-986.