

E-Cigarettes Are Not Proven Safe and Effective Cessation Tools



There is inadequate evidence to recommend e-cigarettes for smoking cessation.

- The 2020 Surgeon General Report on Smoking Cessation concluded that “there is presently inadequate evidence to conclude that e-cigarettes, in general, increase smoking cessation.” The Surgeon General also cautions that because e-cigarettes are not a single product, but “a continually changing and heterogeneous group of products” that “are used in a variety of ways,” it is difficult to make broad generalizations about the efficacy of e-cigarettes for smoking cessation.¹
- The U.S. Preventive Services Task Force (USPSTF), which makes recommendations about the effectiveness of specific preventive care services, concluded that “the current evidence is insufficient to assess the balance of benefits and harms of electronic cigarettes (e-cigarettes) for tobacco cessation in adults... The USPSTF recommends that clinicians direct patients who use tobacco to other tobacco cessation interventions with proven effectiveness and established safety.”²

E-cigarettes, including flavored e-cigarettes, have not been proven to be safe and effective for helping smokers quit.

- While some individual studies and reviews have found e-cigarettes may help smokers switch from conventional cigarettes, comprehensive reviews by leading U.S. health authorities have found the overall evidence inconclusive. Moreover, although randomized controlled trials (RCTs) suggest certain types of e-cigarettes used under certain conditions may help smokers quit, real world population studies, evaluating e-cigarette use as a consumer product, consistently find that e-cigarette use is not associated with successful quitting.³
- There is insufficient evidence to demonstrate that flavors help adult smokers switch from cigarettes to e-cigarettes. A 2025 systematic review and meta-analysis, investigating the role of e-liquid flavors for complete switching, concluded, “there is no clear association between the use of e-cigarette flavours and smoking cessation...”⁴ Although studies show that many adult e-cigarette users use flavored e-cigarettes,⁵ a preference for flavors does not demonstrate that flavors actually increase complete switching or that flavors are needed to stop cigarette smoking.⁶
- The evidence is clear that flavors attract youth. Nine out of ten youth e-cigarette users use flavored e-cigarettes.⁷

E-cigarettes are popular among young people, while there has been no significant uptake among older adults.

- Over 1.6 million youth, including 7.8% of US high schoolers, are current e-cigarette users.⁸
- 15.3% of 18-24-year-olds use e-cigarettes every day or some days.⁹ More than half of 18-24 year-old e-cigarette users (65.5%) have never smoked cigarettes.¹⁰ There is no reason for a never smoker to use e-cigarettes.
- In 2024, 7.0% of adults currently used e-cigarettes.¹¹ Of great concern, the majority of adult e-cigarette users continue to smoke cigarettes or have never been smokers. Nearly 60% of adult e-cigarette users are also current cigarette smokers (dual users) (26.7%) or have never been smokers (32.2%).¹²

E-Cigarettes Are Not Proven Safe and Effective Cessation Tools

- Any potential that e-cigarettes may have at helping smokers quit cannot come at the expense of large-scale youth use. E-cigarettes are addicting kids, putting their health at risk and threatening decades of progress in reducing youth tobacco use.

Several evidence-based treatment options are available to help adult smokers quit.

- There are seven FDA approved tobacco cessation medications on the market today that are proven safe and effective, in addition to cessation counseling, which has also been identified as an effective cessation tool.
- No tobacco product is safe, including e-cigarettes. No e-cigarette has received approval from the FDA to be sold as a tobacco cessation product. When FDA authorizes a tobacco product for sale, it does not mean that the product is “approved” or has been proven safe and effective for smoking cessation.

1 U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), Office of the Surgeon General, “Smoking Cessation: A Report of the Surgeon General,” 2020 <https://www.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/2020-cessation-sgr-full-report.pdf>.

2 United States Preventive Services Task Force, “Interventions for Tobacco Smoking Cessation in Adults, Including Pregnant Persons, Final Recommendation Statement,” 2021, <https://www.uspreventiveservicestaskforce.org/uspstf/recommendation/tobacco-use-in-adults-and-pregnant-women-counseling-and-interventions>.

3 Wang, Richard J., et al., “E-Cigarette Use and Adult Cigarette Smoking Cessation: A Meta-Analysis,” American Journal of Public Health Published online ahead of print December 22, 2020.; Quach NE, et al. Daily or Nondaily Vaping and Smoking Cessation Among Smokers. JAMA Network Open. 2025 Mar 3;8(3):e250089-.

4 Lindson N, et al. An update of a systematic review and meta-analyses exploring flavours in intervention studies of e-cigarettes for smoking cessation. Addiction. 2025 Apr;120(4):770-8.

5 Gravely, S, et al., The Association of E-cigarette Flavors With Satisfaction, Enjoyment, and Trying to Quit or Stay Abstinent From Smoking Among Regular Adult Vapers From Canada and the United States: Findings From the 2018 ITC Four Country Smoking and Vaping Survey, Nicotine & Tobacco Research, Volume 22, Issue 10, October 2020, Pages 1831-1841, <https://doi.org/10.1093/ntr/ntaa095>; Leventhal AM, Dai H. Prevalence of Flavored e-Cigarette Use Among Subpopulations of Adults in the United States. J Natl Cancer Inst. 2021;113(4):418-424. doi:10.1093/jnci/djaa118; Kasza, Karin A., et al. “Adults’ E-Cigarette Flavor Use and Cigarette Quit Attempts: Population Assessment of Tobacco and Health Study Findings.” American Journal of Preventive Medicine 60.2 (2021): 300-302.

6 Zare, S, et al., “A systematic review of consumer preference for e-cigarette attributes: Flavor, nicotine strength, and type,” PLoS One. 2018 Mar 15;13(3), 2018.

7 Park-Lee E, Jamal A, Cowan H, et al., “Notes from the Field: E-Cigarette and Nicotine Pouch Use Among Middle and High School Students — United States, 2024,” MMWR 2024;73(75): 774-778. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.15585/mmwr.mm7335a3>.

8 Park-Lee E, Jamal A, Cowan H, et al., “Notes from the Field: E-Cigarette and Nicotine Pouch Use Among Middle and High School Students — United States, 2024,” MMWR 2024;73(75): 774-778. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.15585/mmwr.mm7335a3>.

9 CDC, “Tobacco Product Use Among Adults – United States, 2022 – 2022 National Health Interview Survey (NHIS) Highlights,” September 10, 2024. <https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/media/pdfs/2024/09/cdc-osh-ncis-data-report-508.pdf>.

10 CDC, “Tobacco Product Use Among Adults – United States, 2022 – 2022 National Health Interview Survey (NHIS) Highlights,” September 10, 2024. <https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/media/pdfs/2024/09/cdc-osh-ncis-data-report-508.pdf>.

11 National Center for Health Statistics. Percentage of current electronic cigarette use for adults aged 18 and over, United States, 2024. National Health Interview Survey. Generated interactively: Aug 13 2025 from https://www.cdc.gov/NHISDataQueryTool/SHS_adult/index.html.

12 CDC, “Tobacco Product Use Among Adults – United States, 2022 – 2022 National Health Interview Survey (NHIS) Highlights,” September 10, 2024. <https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/media/pdfs/2024/09/cdc-osh-ncis-data-report-508.pdf>.