**Electronic cigarettes fact sheet**

***Fast facts***

* The number of never-smoking youth who used e-cigarettes increased from 79,000 in 2011 to more than 263,000 in 2013.[[1]](#footnote-1)
* In 2011, about 21 percent of adults who smoke traditional cigarettes had used e-cigarettes, up from about 10 percent in 2010.[[2]](#footnote-2)
* Overall, about six percent of all adults have tried e-cigarettes, with estimates nearly doubling from 2010.[[3]](#footnote-3)
* E-cigarette use among U.S. middle school students doubled from 1.4 percent to 2.7 percent in 2012.[[4]](#footnote-4)

***What are e-cigarettes?***

Electronic cigarettes, also known as e-cigarettes or electronic nicotine delivery systems, are electronic devices that deliver flavored nicotine and other chemicals to users as a vapor instead of as smoke. These devices are designed to mimic the look of actual cigarettes and come in a wide range of flavors, nicotine levels and brands. Although they do not contain smoke, they still expose others to secondhand emissions[[5]](#footnote-5) and also contain highly addictive substances that some researchers believe may prime the brain to become addicted to other substances.[[6]](#footnote-6)

There are many misconceptions associated with the usage of e-cigarettes. Many believe that they are linked to the cessation of smoking cigarettes, however, that has not been proven by the FDA. Numerous commercials and advertisements often promote e-cigarettes as the safer solution, but little is known about the full health risks of using these devices vs traditional cigarettes. These devices have sparked a huge debate on whether their usage helps to reduce the problem of tobacco use, or makes it worse.

***Related content from the journal* CHEST**

* [Effect of E-Cigarettes on Airway Epithelial Ion Transport and Implications for Mucociliary Clearance Defense](http://journal.publications.chestnet.org/article.aspx?articleid=2457129&resultClick=3)
* [POINT: Does the Risk of Electronic Cigarettes Exceed Potential Benefits? Yes](http://journal.publications.chestnet.org/article.aspx?articleid=2237762&resultClick=3)
* [COUNTERPOINT: Does the Risk of Electronic Cigarettes Exceed Potential Benefits? No](http://journal.publications.chestnet.org/article.aspx?articleid=2237765&resultClick=3)
* [Effect of e-Cigarette Use on Cough Reflex Sensitivity](http://journal.publications.chestnet.org/article.aspx?articleid=2430457&resultClick=3)
* [Short-term Pulmonary Effects of Using an Electronic Cigarette: Impact on Respiratory Flow Resistance, Impedance, and Exhaled Nitric Oxide](http://journal.publications.chestnet.org/article.aspx?articleid=1187047&resultClick=3)

***Additional resources***

* [JAMA— e-Cigarette Use and Subsequent Tobacco Use by Adolescents](http://jama.jamanetwork.com/article.aspx?articleid=2428937)

1. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. [More than a quarter-million youth who had never smoked a cigarette used e-cigarettes in 2013.](http://www.cdc.gov/media/releases/2014/p0825-e-cigarettes.html) CDC Newsroom Releases. August 25, 2014. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Center for Disease Control and Prevention. [About one in five U.S. adult cigarette smokers have tried an electronic cigarette](http://www.cdc.gov/media/releases/2013/p0228_electronic_cigarettes.html). CDC Newsroom. February 28, 2013. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Center for Disease Control and Prevention. [About one in five U.S. adult cigarette smokers have tried an electronic cigarette](http://www.cdc.gov/media/releases/2013/p0228_electronic_cigarettes.html). CDC Newsroom. February 28, 2013. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. [Notes from the Field: Electronic Cigarette Use Among Middle and High School Students — United States, 2011–2012](http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm6235a6.htm). Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report. September 6, 2013 [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. American Lung Association. [E-cigarettes and Lung Health](http://www.lung.org/stop-smoking/smoking-facts/e-cigarettes-and-lung-health.html?referrer=https://www.google.com/). Smoking Facts. December, 8, 2015 [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. NIDA for Teens. [Smoking: How It Primes the Brain for Addiction](https://teens.drugabuse.gov/blog/post/smoking-how-it-primes-brain-addiction). Drugs and Health Blog January 24, 2012. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)