

E-Cigarettes

What is an e-cigarette?

Electronic cigarettes go by many names – the most common name is “e-cigarette,” but other terms include e-cigs, vapes, vape pens, mods, and tanks. Most accurately they are called electronic nicotine delivery systems (ENDS) and are a diverse, heterogenous group of devices used to inhale an aerosol received by heating an e-liquid that is often composed of glycerol, flavourings, nicotine, and/or other chemicals.

Generally, ENDS consist of:

- a mouthpiece
- a tank or a cartridge for e-liquid
- a battery
- and an atomizer

What are the different types of e-cigarettes ?

There are different types of e-cigarettes, some are open systems (tubular or mod system), others closed systems (disposable or pod system). Puff Bar, which has been around since 2019, is a well-known brand of disposable electronic cigarettes. There are many similar products from other brands. Young people like these disposable electronic cigarettes because they are cheap and easy to get rid of (see [Puff Bar Brief](#)).

Current ENDS devices on the market



ENDS
(e-cigarettes)

In a nutshell

ENDS are highly heterogeneous products that consist of a mouthpiece, a tank or a cartridge for e-liquid, a battery, and an atomizer, which affects the performance, the inhalation of aerosol, as well as nicotine delivery.

ENDS are easy to buy and simple to use. They pose a public health problem, particularly because of their increased use by youth.

Why is the consumption of e-cigarettes a cause for concern ?

ENDS use among young people has skyrocketed in recent years. Flavourings are one of several significant factors that influence the willingness to try ENDS. The World Health Organisation (WHO) warns that fruit or candy-like aromas appeal to children, and play a role in motivating experimentation among them. This has been confirmed by further studies.

There are thousands of unknown chemicals in e-cigarettes



What are the health risks of e-cigarettes?

Although e-cigarettes do not contain some of the harmful substances in traditional cigarettes, they can still be harmful. This depends on which product is used, how hot the atomizer gets and how well the device is cared for. For example, e-cigarette e-liquids can contain varying amounts of toxic substances, including arsenic, aluminum, and lead, which affect the nervous system. Other studies have shown that they contain chemicals that can damage the lungs. In a 2021 publication, John Hopkins researchers found thousands of unknown chemicals, including industrial chemicals in e-cigarettes.

What are the effects of e-cigarettes on the environment?

E-cigarettes contain toxic chemicals, metals, and nicotine. Disposing of them with household waste is therefore problematic. In other words, e-cigarette waste is not ordinary waste. Disposing of e-cigarettes, such as Puff Bars, are particularly problematic for the environment.

By 2019, there were more than 15,000 different flavours on the market. Particularly in Switzerland, not only have the selection of flavours increased, but also their accessibility via online shops, kiosks, and vape shops, which not only facilitates the development of addiction, but also predisposes youth to future tobacco smoking.

To what extent can e-cigarettes be used to help people give up smoking and limit its harmful effects?

There is a common and widely spread assumption that the consumption of e-cigarettes is safer than conventional cigarette smoking. This has led to an ongoing debate on the use of e-cigarettes as a cessation or harm reduction measure for tobacco smokers. Currently, there is not yet enough scientific data to say for sure whether e-cigarettes are an effective smoking cessation aid.



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