

# Electronic Cigarettes

## What is an Electronic Cigarette?

- Electronic cigarettes are battery-powered devices made of stainless steel that vaporize liquid nicotine or other contents in varying concentrations.<sup>1</sup>
- They are often designed to resemble a cigarette, cigar, or pipe.<sup>2</sup>
- Electronic cigarettes do not contain tobacco or emit smoke.<sup>1,3</sup>
- Electronic cigarettes usually contain anywhere between 0 - 18 milligrams of nicotine.<sup>4</sup>
- An FDA analysis found that many of the electronic cigarette cartridges labeled nicotine-free contained small amounts of nicotine.<sup>5</sup>
- The cartridges in electronic cigarettes are available in an assortment of flavors, including bubblegum, mint and chocolate.<sup>2</sup>
- Electronic cigarettes have both carcinogens and toxic chemicals, such as diethylene glycol (ingredient in antifreeze).<sup>5</sup>



\*American Legacy Foundation. Electronic Cigarettes ("E-Cigarettes").2009.

## Who Uses Electronic Cigarettes?

- In 2010, current smokers in Minnesota were approximately 5 times more likely than non-smokers to use electronic cigarettes. Approximately 3.6% of current smokers compared to 0.7% of the general population use electronic cigarettes.<sup>6</sup>
- Use of electronic cigarettes decreases with age, with the highest prevalence rate among 18-24 year olds.<sup>6</sup>
- Among current smokers, females are more likely than males to use electronic cigarettes.<sup>6</sup>

## Marketing & Regulation of Electronic Cigarettes

- Electronic cigarettes are marketed by manufacturers as a device to help smokers quit smoking.<sup>1</sup>
- Smoke-free laws have helped electronic cigarette manufactures to market the device as an alternative for smokers to get their nicotine fix in places where smoking is banned.<sup>2</sup>
- Importing electronic cigarettes into the U.S. is currently banned due to safety concerns and the regulatory status.<sup>2</sup>
- Electronic cigarettes are not regulated by the Food and Drug Administration as a smoking cessation aid.<sup>3</sup>
- There is no evidence that electronic cigarettes are a safe and effective strategy to help smokers quit.<sup>1</sup>

## References

- <sup>1</sup> World Health Organization. Marketers of electronic cigarettes should halt unproved therapy claims. News release, September 19, 2008. Available at: <http://www.who.int/mediacentre/news/releases/2008/pr34/en/>
- <sup>2</sup> Tobacco Control Legal Consortium. Regulating e-cigarettes. St. Paul, MN: Public Health Law Center, 2010. Available at: <http://www.publichealthlawcenter.org/sites/default/files/resources/tclc-guide-regulatingecigs-2010.pdf>
- <sup>3</sup> Public Health Law and Policy. Are e-cigarettes regulated by the FDA? Available at: <http://www.phlpnet.org/tobacco-control/question/are-e-cigarettes-regulate>
- <sup>4</sup> Food and Drug Administration. Consumer updates: FDA warns of health risks posed by e-cigarettes. Available at: <http://www.fda.gov/ForConsumers/ConsumerUpdates/ucm173401.htm>
- <sup>5</sup> Food and Drug Administration. Evaluation of e-cigarettes. Memo to Michael Levy. May 4, 2009. Available at: <http://www.fda.gov/downloads/Drugs/ScienceResearch/UCM173250.pdf>
- <sup>6</sup> Minnesota Adult Tobacco Survey: Tobacco use in Minnesota – 1999 to 2010. Minneapolis, MN: ClearWay Minnesota<sup>SM</sup>, Minnesota Department of Health; 2011. Available at: <http://www.mnadulttobaccosurvey.org>

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