

E-cigarette Fact Sheet

(January 31, 2017)

- Electronic cigarettes, or e-cigarettes, are battery-powered devices that provide doses of nicotine and other additives to the user in an aerosol. The devices are metal or plastic tubes that contain a cartridge filled with a liquid that is vaporized by a battery-powered heating element. The aerosol is inhaled by the user when they draw on the device, as they would a regular tobacco cigarette, and the user exhales the aerosol into the environment.
- E-cigarettes do not just emit “harmless water vapor.” Second hand aerosol from e-cigarettes contains nicotine, ultrafine particles and toxins that are known to cause cancer. (See the attached sheet from Americans for Nonsmokers Rights).
- E-cigarette use in public places can have serious adverse health consequences on non-users. Almost one-third of adverse-event reports for e-cigarettes are related to secondhand exposure, according to a U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) analysis. The aerosol can contain nicotine, metal, and silicate particles, among other substances. The researchers examined the 90 adverse-event reports submitted to the FDA from January 1, 2012 to June 30, 2014. Of these, 33 were related to nonusers.
- As of January 1, 2017, 589 cities and counties across America and 13 in Kentucky have already included e-cigarettes in laws prohibiting smoking in public places. (See the sheet from Americans for Nonsmokers Rights).
- The nicotine inside the cartridges is addictive. When you stop using it, you can get withdrawal symptoms including feeling irritable, depressed, restless and anxious. E-cigarettes can have the adverse health consequences as conventional cigarettes.
- The number of never-smoking youth who used e-cigarettes more than tripled from 79,000 in 2011 to more than 263,000 in 2013.
- This raises concern that there may be young people, for whom e-cigarettes could be an entry point to use of conventional tobacco products, including cigarettes.
- There is also evidence that e-cigarette users are becoming dual users of both cigarettes and e-cigarettes.
- There is little scientific evidence to indicate that e-cigarettes can help people quit smoking, although manufacturers are touting this benefit. Instead e-cigarettes only serve to get more people hooked.
- Whether or not e-cigarettes can be beneficial to help smokers quit is NOT the issue. When used in public places, they are harmful to others. This is why they should be included in Louisville’s Smokefree law.
- E-cigarettes are also an increasing poisoning risk for children age 5 and younger. In 2013 the Kentucky Regional Poison Control Center of Kosair Children’s Hospital saw a 333% increase in calls resulting from young children ingesting nicotine and other toxins from e-cigarettes. Nationally poison centers saw a 161% increase.