

CDC Finally Gets Vaping Right, While FDA Permits New Cigarettes



By Alex Berezow, PhD — January 22, 2020

If you're a government agency like the CDC, the best time to admit to a huge mistake is on Friday afternoon before a three-day weekend. And if you're a government agency like the FDA, there's never a good time to make a boneheaded decision.



Credit: Public Domain/Wikipedia [1]

Thanks in part to the efforts of ACSH and other evidence-minded health policy advocates, the CDC has admitted to a huge mistake. And we know they know it's a mistake because they made the announcement on Friday afternoon before a three-day weekend with little fanfare*. They hoped nobody would notice. But we did.

The *Wall Street Journal* [reports](#) [2] that the CDC updated its website so that it "no longer includes the broad reference to stopping vaping." More than four months ago, [we called them out](#) [3] for their ludicrous and counterproductive recommendation that all people avoid e-cigarettes (including smokers who are trying to quit). The CDC finally gave in to science. Better late than never.

The CDC's [new recommendation](#) [4] is to avoid vaping THC products, "particularly from informal sources like friends, family, or in-person or online dealers." Informal sources. That's a nice way of saying "illegal, black market products" -- just like ACSH has been saying for months. The CDC went on to recommend that "adults using nicotine-containing e-cigarettes or vaping products as an alternative to cigarettes should not go back to smoking."



[5] YES! Common sense wins at the CDC. How about at

the FDA?

FDA Permits Two New Cigarettes

Presumably, the FDA doesn't want smokers to die. Yet, it still doesn't put vaping devices -- which are known to help smokers quit and are even [recommended by the UK's National Health Service](#) [6] -- on its list of [approved cessation products](#) [7].

What has the FDA done instead? Well, it gave [permission for two new types of cigarettes](#) [8] to be sold on the market. Are they low-tar or extra-filtered? Nope. They are low-nicotine, which means that a smoker -- if he or she switched to this new product -- would actually have to smoke more cigarettes to get the same nicotine fix.

The FDA's rationale is that a low-nicotine cigarette is less likely to cause people to become addicted to smoking. But do you know what else accomplishes that at a far lower level of risk? Vaping.

CDC 1

FDA 0

**Note: The WSJ says the update was posted on Thursday, but the CDC's website indicates Friday.*

Source URL: <https://www.acsh.org/news/2020/01/22/cdc-finally-gets-vaping-right-while-fda-permits-new-cigarettes-14524>

Links

[1] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Smoking#/media/File:Van_Gogh_-_Skull_with_a_burning_cigarette.jpg

[2] <https://www.wsj.com/articles/cdc-steps-back-from-broad-recommendation-to-refrain-from-e-cigarettes-11579293494>

[3] <https://www.acsh.org/news/2019/09/10/everything-goes-pot-myths-are-driving-fda-cdc-vaping-policy-14278>

[4] https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/basic_information/e-cigarettes/severe-lung-disease.html

[5] <http://22memeinternet.blogspot.com/2014/07/aw-jeez-not-this-shit-again.html>

[6] <https://www.acsh.org/news/2017/08/29/e-cigarettes-cdc-should-learn-uks-nhs-11761>

[7] <https://www.fda.gov/consumers/consumer-updates/want-quit-smoking-fda-approved-products-can-help>

[8] <https://www.fda.gov/news-events/press-announcements/fda-permits-sale-two-new-reduced-nicotine-cigarettes-through-premarket-tobacco-product-application>