

Britain's Department of Health: E-Cigarettes 95 Percent Less Harmful Than Tobacco

By ACSH Staff — August 20, 2015



Britain's Department of Health announced electronic

cigarettes are around 95 percent less harmful than tobacco and should be promoted smoking cessation device, according to the results of a new study released Wednesday.

Authors of the Public Health England study say that most of the cancer causing chemicals found in combustible cigarettes are absent in electronic ones.

E-cigarettes are a method to inhale nicotine-laced vapor, with the idea being that, much as with nicotine gums or patches, people trying to quit smoking will gradually reduce the nicotine that makes them crave cigarettes.

But confusion abounds, primarily due to a poor choice of name in "e-cigarettes."

Due to their increased popularity, there have been increased calls for regulations. Yet that might be a mistake. More regulations (which is codeword for taxes) is going to mean fewer people will use them to quit. [As the Sweden example shows](#) [1], if you want tobacco-related deaths to plummet, make alternatives to smoking more affordable, not less.

On the health side of the equation, both direct inhalation and indirect (the vapor analog to "second-hand smoke" from cigarettes) were substantially reduced in e-cigarette users.

The study criticized media campaigns that have called e-cigarettes equally or even more harmful than smoking and imply they could be a "gateway" to smoking among young people teenagers.

"Instead the evidence consistently finds that e-cigarettes are another tool for stopping smoking and in my view smokers should try vaping, and vapers should stop smoking entirely," Professor Ann McNeil who helped author the study, [told Angus Berwick at Reuters](#) [2].

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[1] <http://acsh.org/2015/08/wages-of-sin-taxes-a-boost-for-smoking-cessation-tools/>

[2] <http://in.reuters.com/article/2015/08/18/us-health-britain-ecigarettes-idINKCN0QN2AC20150818?source=acsh.org>