

Vaping and E-cigarette use: Is it what it's cracked up to be?

The University of Illinois' smoke-free policy bans the use of e-cigarettes. Vaping will still be banned when we expand our policy to include all tobacco products in August, 2019.

Read on to learn about e-cigarettes, and why the campus does not allow their use:

What are e-cigarettes?

E-cigarettes are a fairly new way to get nicotine into your system. They can look a lot like tobacco cigarettes, flash drives or other shapes, but are actually a battery-operated device. They produce vapor or aerosol, not smoke. This is done by heating liquid nicotine. E-cigarette use is often called "vaping".

Is vaping safe?

E-cigarette manufacturers claim that vaping is safe. But the facts aren't there. Consider this:

- Since e-cigarettes are not regulated, users have no way of knowing exactly how much nicotine they are getting. Users may not get enough nicotine to satisfy their craving. Or they may get an overload. This can be uncomfortable, or even dangerous. Also, nicotine can impede brain development, which continues till about age 25.
- Laboratory analysis of e-cigarette vapor shows similar carcinogens to tobacco cigarettes. So using e-cigarettes can be bad for your health. Breathing in secondhand vapor can be unhealthy too.
- Nicotine poisoning from e-cigarettes accounts for more than 40 percent of poison center calls. More than half of these calls involve children under age five.
- Just about every leading health agency has serious concerns about e-cigarettes.

Can e-cigarettes help you quit smoking?

Makers of e-cigarettes promote them as a great way to quit smoking. But they have not been proven to work for cessation. They are not approved by the FDA as a cessation device. Most health agencies recommend using FDA-approved tools such as nicotine replacement products (e.g. gum or patches), or medications.

Where can I get more information?

Learn more at these sites:

Illinois smoke-free policy <http://go.illinois.edu/smokefree/docs/smokefreepolicy.pdf>

FDA info: <http://www.fda.gov/NewsEvents/PublicHealthFocus/ucm172906.htm>

No smoking

No tobacco

No vape

