

# **E-Cigarettes**

On April 25, 2011, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) <u>announced</u> that e-cigarettes will be regulated as tobacco products unless the products are marketed as therapeutic. While FDA made the initial announcement that it intends to regulate most e-cigarettes as a separate class of tobacco products, much more research is needed about the potential health effects of e-cigarettes. The American Lung Association urges FDA to move forward without delay with further regulatory guidance and with additional product research to determine any public health impacts.

## What is an E-Cigarette?

- According to the FDA, electronic cigarettes, or e-cigarettes, are devices that allow users to inhale a vapor containing nicotine or other substances.<sup>i</sup>
- Unlike traditional cigarettes, e-cigarettes are battery-operated and use an atomizer to heat a refillable cartridge that then releases a chemical-filled vapor.
- E-cigarettes are often available in flavors that may appeal to children and teens, including chocolate, strawberry and mint. ii

## **Health Effects of E-Cigarettes**

- There is currently no scientific evidence establishing the safety of e-cigarettes. No brand of e-cigarettes has been submitted to the FDA for evaluation and approval. iii
- In initial lab tests, FDA found detectable levels of carcinogens and toxic chemicals, including an ingredient used in anti-freeze, in two leading brands of e-cigarettes and 18 various cartridges. The lab tests also found that cartridges labeled as nicotine-free had traceable levels of nicotine.
- There is also no evidence that shows the vapors emitted by e-cigarettes are safe for non-users to inhale and we support prohibiting the use of e-cigarettes under smokefree laws. The Lung Association also recognizes that the use of e-cigarettes may complicate efforts to enforce and comply with smokefree laws.
- Some distributors either directly or indirectly market e-cigarettes as tobacco cessation tools. No scientific studies demonstrate safety and efficacy of their use for this purpose.

### **Can E-Cigarettes Help Someone Quit Smoking?**

• There is still no scientific evidence that e-cigarettes can help smokers quit. VI The U.S. Public Health Service has found that the seven therapies approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration in combination with individual, group or phone cessation counseling is the most effective way to help smokers quit. Until and unless the FDA approves a specific e-cigarette for use as a tobacco cessation aid, the American Lung Association does not support any direct or implied claims that e-cigarettes help smokers quit.

### **State Laws Pertaining to E-Cigarettes**

 Six states – California, Colorado, Minnesota, New Hampshire, Tennessee, and Utah – have enacted legislation prohibiting the sale of e-cigarettes to minors.

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> U.S. Food and Drug Administration. "E-Cigarettes: Questions and Answers." September 9, 2010. Available at:

http://www.fda.gov/ForConsumers/ConsumerUpdates/ucm225210.htm.

ii U.S. Food and Drug Administration. "FDA Warns of Health Risks Posed by E-Cigarettes." July 23, 2009. Available at:

http://www.fda.gov/ForConsumers/ConsumerUpdates/ucm173401.htm.

iii U.S. Food and Drug Administration. "FDA and Public Health Experts Warn About Electronic Cigarettes." July 22, 2009. Available at: <a href="http://www.fda.gov/NewsEvents/Newsroom/PressAnnouncements/2009/ucm173222.htm">http://www.fda.gov/NewsEvents/Newsroom/PressAnnouncements/2009/ucm173222.htm</a>.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>iv</sup> U.S. Food and Drug Administration. "Summary of Results: Laboratory Analysis of Electronic Cigarettes Conducted by FDA." July 22, 2009. Available at: <a href="http://www.fda.gov/NewsEvents/PublicHealthFocus/ucm173146.htm">http://www.fda.gov/NewsEvents/PublicHealthFocus/ucm173146.htm</a>.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>v</sup> U.S. Food and Drug Administration. "FDA Acts Against 5 Electronic Cigarette Distributors." September 9, 2010. Available at: <a href="http://www.fda.gov/NewsEvents/Newsroom/PressAnnouncements/ucm225224.htm">http://www.fda.gov/NewsEvents/Newsroom/PressAnnouncements/ucm225224.htm</a>.

wi World Health Organization. "Marketers of Electronic Cigarettes Should Halt Unproven Therapy Claims." September 19, 2008. Available at: <a href="http://www.who.int/mediacentre/news/releases/2008/pr34/en/">http://www.who.int/mediacentre/news/releases/2008/pr34/en/</a>.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>vii</sup> American Lung Association. State Legislated Actions on Tobacco Issues (SLATI) online database. Available at: <u>www.lungusa2.org/slati</u>.