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PATIENT & CAREGIVER EDUCATION

# Frequently Asked Questions About Electronic Smoking Devices

This information answers frequently asked questions about electronic nicotine delivery systems (ENDS).

## What are Electronic Nicotine Delivery Systems (ENDS)?

Electronic cigarettes (e-cigarettes), vaporizers, vape pens, hookah pens, and e-pipes are all ENDS. ENDS are battery-powered smoking devices that can look and feel like regular cigarettes. Instead of burning tobacco like regular cigarettes, ENDS use cartridges filled with a liquid containing nicotine, flavorings, and other chemicals. The battery heats up the liquid, turning it into a vapor or mist that you then breathe in. Using ENDS is also referred to as “vaping”, “vaporizing”, or “e-smoking.”

## Are ENDS safe to use?

The long-term health risks of using ENDS are still unknown. The US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and other leading public health organizations agree that more research studies on the safety of ENDS use are needed.

While they don't fill your lungs with harmful smoke like cigarettes do, ENDS still have nicotine and other chemicals in them. One study found that the vapors in e-cigarettes are not only made up of water, but also contain chemicals that can cause respiratory problems in some people.

In 2016, the FDA began regulating the making, selling, and marketing of all tobacco products, including ENDS. This means that people younger than 18

can't buy any type of tobacco product, including ENDS. It also means that health warnings will be placed on all tobacco products.

## Can ENDS help people quit smoking?

We don't know whether ENDS can help or make it harder for people trying to quit smoking. They aren't an FDA-approved method of quitting. Therefore, we recommend that you use safe and proven methods, such as nicotine patches, gum, or lozenges.

Although research is still needed, some people are using ENDS to:

- Reduce their exposure to harmful chemicals in regular cigarette smoke
- Help manage nicotine withdrawal cravings
- Cut down or quit smoking
- Keep from starting to smoke again (prevent smoking relapse)

While some people may smoke fewer regular cigarettes if they use ENDS, they may also be less likely to quit smoking altogether.

There are many resources available to help you quit smoking, including medications and counseling. If you're considering quitting smoking and need help, call the Memorial Sloan Kettering (MSK) Tobacco Treatment Program at 212-610-0507 or go to: [www.mskcc.org/cancer-care/counseling-support/tobacco-treatment](http://www.mskcc.org/cancer-care/counseling-support/tobacco-treatment).

## Are patients permitted to use the ENDS products in the hospital?

No. Using ENDS in any MSK facility is not allowed.

# Additional Resources

## **National Cancer Institute (NCI) Toll-free Quitline**

1-877-448-7848

[www.smokefree.gov](http://www.smokefree.gov)

## **American Cancer Society (ACS)**

1-800-227-2345

[www.cancer.org/cancer/cancer-causes/tobacco-and-cancer](http://www.cancer.org/cancer/cancer-causes/tobacco-and-cancer)

## **US Food & Drug Administration**

[www.fda.gov/TobaccoProducts/Labeling/  
ProductsIngredientsComponents/ucm456610](http://www.fda.gov/TobaccoProducts/Labeling/ProductsIngredientsComponents/ucm456610)

## **OnCancer: News and Insights from Memorial Sloan Kettering**

[www.mskcc.org/blog/are-electronic-cigarettes-safer-use-conventional-cigarettes](http://www.mskcc.org/blog/are-electronic-cigarettes-safer-use-conventional-cigarettes)

If you have any questions, contact a member of your healthcare team directly. If you're a patient at MSK and you need to reach a provider after 5:00 PM, during the weekend, or on a holiday, call 212-639-2000.

For more resources, visit [www.mskcc.org/pe](http://www.mskcc.org/pe) to search our virtual library.

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