

facts on

Electronic Cigarettes (e-cigarettes) and the Health and Safety Risk for Children

E-cigarettes may pose a health risk to children

Poisoning

Children can be poisoned by the liquid from e-cigarettes if they swallow the liquid. The liquid is easily absorbed through the skin or eyes and may cause rashes or irritation. Children are attracted to the many scents and flavourings of the vapour. They may confuse the liquid cartridge with a candy or a drink. If the cartridge contains nicotine, the risk of poisoning increases.



If the device contains nicotine, children can become poisoned by the nicotine. Signs and symptoms include:

- nausea or vomiting
- a fast heartbeat
- twitching and seizures
- difficulty breathing
- death

Second-hand vapour

Second-hand e-cigarette vapour may irritate the lungs, making it harder for children to breathe; especially those who have asthma. Inhaling the vapour can also irritate the mouth, throat, eyes or cause allergic reactions. New research indicates the flavouring chemicals in e-cigarettes can cause lung damage when inhaled.



Choking

E-cigarettes may be a safety risk for children. Children may choke on the various parts of an e-cigarette.



What can parents do?

- Talk with your children about the health and safety risks of e-cigarettes
- Keep all parts of e-cigarettes out of the reach of children
- Dispose of e-cigarette batteries and liquid cartridges by putting in a garbage can that children cannot open
- Limit use of e-cigarettes to places where smoking is permitted
- Reduce your use of e-cigarettes in front of your children
- Check the Canadian Paediatric Society's recommendations on protecting children and youth from the dangers of e-cigarettes at <http://www.caringforkids.cps.ca/handouts/e-cigarettes-a-danger-to-children-and-youth>
- Ask a health care provider or pharmacist for support to quit smoking

CALL
**POISON & DRUG
INFORMATION SERVICE**
at **1-866-454-1212**

if you think your child ingested or absorbed the liquid from an e-cigarette.

For More Information

Contact:

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What are e-cigarettes and how do they work?

E-cigarettes come in many forms and have multiple parts (see figure below). The devices often look like cigarettes or pens. The vapour mimics the appearance of smoke. The act of using an e-cigarette is often referred to as **vaping**. Other names for e-cigarettes include **vapour pens** and **electronic nicotine delivery systems (ENDS)**. *These terms are more commonly used in the United States to describe devices that contain nicotine.*






There is currently no legislation requiring warning labels, child-proof packaging, or labelling for the amounts of chemicals in the liquid.

The sale of e-cigarettes with nicotine is illegal in Canada, yet many are available.

A typical e-cigarette is made up of:

- a cartridge that holds a liquid (often called e-juice)
- a vaporizer or atomizer that heats and turns the liquid into a vapour or aerosol
- a battery that powers the device
- a mouthpiece to inhale

The cartridge contains varying amounts of propylene glycol or vegetable glycerin, flavourings, water, and other chemicals. The product does not contain tobacco.

Product	Description
<p>Disposable e-cigarette</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cigarette-shaped • Not rechargeable or refillable • Intended to be discarded after use
<p>Rechargeable e-cigarette</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cigarette-shaped • Contains an element to regulate puff duration • Refillable
<p>Pen-style, medium-sized rechargeable e-cigarette</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Larger than a cigarette • Refillable • Has a switch to regulate length and frequency of puffs
<p>Tank-style, large-sized rechargeable e-cigarette</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Large, refillable cartridge • Has a switch to customize battery capacity
<p>E-cigarette liquid</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • E-cigarette liquid is not regulated and comes in a variety of sizes, shapes, and flavours.

Reading List

American Academy of Pediatrics: Julius B. Richmond Centre of Excellence. E-Cigarettes: A Threat to Health. Retrieved from <http://www.2.aap.org/richmondcenter/Gallery/ECigInfographic.jpg>

Children’s Safety Network. (2015, July). E-Cigarette Poisoning. Retrieved from http://www.childrensafetynetwork.org/sites/childrensafetynetwork.org/files/E-Cigarette_Poisoning_Infographic_Print.pdf

Durmowicz, E.L. (2015). The impact of electronic cigarettes on the paediatric population. *Tobacco Control*, 23, ii41-ii46. Retrieved from http://tobaccocontrol.bmj.com/content/23/suppl_2/ii41.full.pdf+html?sid=496176b3-60a2-47e5-960f-5f81b6e248cf

Propel Centre for Population Health Impact. (2015 Edition). *Tobacco Use in Canada: Patterns and Trend. Special Supplement: E-cigarettes in Canada.* Retrieved from http://tobaccoreport.ca/2015/TobaccoUseinCanada_2015_E-cigaretteSupplement.pdf

Reed, J.L., Gervais, A.A., & Reid, R.D. (2013). Five Things to Know About ... Electronic Cigarettes. *Canadian Medical Association Journal*, 185, 1427. Retrieved from <http://www.cmaj.ca/content/185/16/1427.full.pdf+html>

The Canadian Dental Hygienists Association. E-Cigarette Fact Sheet. Retrieved from <http://www.dentalhygienecanada.ca/pdfs/DHcanada/e-cig-fact-sheet.pdf>

Electronic Cigarettes (e-cigarettes) and the Health and Safety Risks for Children reading list: <http://www.skprevention.ca/tobacco-and-other-drugs/#Tobacco>