

Vaping 101 – A Health Guide

Provided by [Martha Springer](#)

When you notice someone standing on the street puffing away at their vape pen, do you stop and think for a second and say “ Hey that looks cool!” I don’t think any of us do. So, when we see celebrities such as Johnny Depp and Katy Perry doing it — maybe some of us start to change our opinions. Do we know any better? Do social influences add pressure to vaping just like there was to smoking?

Fun fact, a vaporizer was given out as a gift to celebs in the 2016 Academy Awards.

Social changes to how we perceive vaping are occurring. Frankly, as our understanding of what vaping is becomes clearer, we are starting to put restrictions on who, how and where we can vape. Just like cigarettes. In fact, vaping among teens is becoming a [trend](#), sharing a vape is now like sharing a cigarette — they just pass it around. Some have come to call this “Vape Culture.”

The Social Warzone

Social media also plays a big role in everything we do these days — from sharing our best moments in life to potentially causing social problems. In the last few years, vaping itself has grown from just a few hundred people to thousands around the world.

Facebook once had hundreds of vaping groups. As of late, Facebook has been cracking down on various vaping groups; it is almost labeling vaping as something negative. On the other hand, there is a group called [CASAA](#), with over a 1000 members that dedicate themselves to stopping vape bans, educating lawmakers and the general public.

Vaping is Expanding

Have you ever heard of Comic Con and WonderCon? If so, you may be surprised to know vaping has its very own conventions. Vapefest is one of the most popular shows that’s held all over, in many cities. Another popular show is known as Electronic Cigarette Convention in the US, where manufacturers and vapers meet. The two biggest cloud chasing competitions in the US are International Cloud Championships held in California, and the World Series of Vape, organized in Las Vegas.

What is vaping exactly? You should get to know the different types of vaporizers before diving deeper into the world of vaping.

For a layperson, we can define vaping as:

The act of inhaling water vapor from an e-cig.

The vapor is the gaseous form of flavored e-liquid – which may or may not contain nicotine. You can find e-liquids in virtually every imaginable flavor and a wide variety of nicotine strengths. Unlike smoke, vapor looks very thick and smells like candy or the flavor it has. But, is it less harmful than smoking? Have we found the perfect and harmless solution for people addicted to nicotine? Let's see.

The debate about if vaping is good or not has gone on since it was first commercialized in the 1980's. Lately, vaping has become quite popular around the world, and a lot of people are turning to vaping as a medium to help them stop smoking. What has been learned so far? There is a lot of debate over the potential that vaping can help someone quit smoking.

A study published in [Nicotine and Tobacco Research](#) shows data taken from an ongoing web-based smoking cessation trial. The research consisted of 2,123 people over 3-months, providing follow-up data every 30-days. The results of the test showed that 31.7% of participants reported using a vaporizer to quit in the past three months. One of the most interesting points about the test was that during the follow-up, vaporizer users made more of an effort to quit and took more cessation aids than smokers who did not use vaporizers to quit.

Fun Fact, 20% of Americans e-smoke once a day.

Vaping isn't the magic cure for smoking, even now as more and more research is being done, scientists cannot agree on how to view vaping. In March 2017, [The Journal JAMA Cardiology](#) designed a test was to see if vaping would increase your chances of heart disease. The research was performed on 42 participants, 35% women and 35% white males, the average age was 27.6 years of age. Results of the research were heightened levels of adrenaline in the heart, oxidative stress and a harder time for your body to defend against free radicals.

Why are people for vaping, what is the big draw? For starters, vaping is found to be cheaper a habit than smoking. According to [Dallas News](#), a smoker can spend between \$1,500 in low-tax states, to about \$5,000 in more expensive states. The average pack costs about \$13. If you add that up over a year, it works out to \$2,250 out of your pocket a year.

When switching to disposable e-cigarettes; they cost about \$6-10 each, which works out to between \$1,100 to \$1,800 a year. Therefore, you are saving multiple hundreds of dollars. Also, when it comes to rechargeable vaporizers with disposable cartridges, your initial purchase will be higher around \$10 to \$35. In the end, you may pay \$2.50 apiece to replace the cartridges, but you have the potential to save up to \$1,800 a year.

Another great point that is mentioned by [WebMD](#) is:

Vaping offers a potential for smokers to reduce their health risks if electronic cigarettes are used in place of tobacco cigarettes and are considered a step toward ending all tobacco and nicotine use. Thomas Eissenberg, Virginia Commonwealth University in Richmond

E-Cigs Less Hazardous than Cigarettes – Policy Statement from the AHA

Published: August 24, 2014

Although the US government and FDA have a negative opinion about e-cigarettes, [American Heart Association](#) (AHA) took a different approach in an online 20-page extensive report, although a little cautiously:

E-cigarettes either do not contain or have lower levels of several tobacco-derived harmful and potentially harmful constituents compared with cigarettes and smokeless tobacco... [e-cigarettes] present an opportunity for harm reduction if smokers use them as substitutes for cigarettes. Policy Statement from the AHA

Everything related to vaping isn't a bed of roses. What are the long-term effects? Do you know what chemicals they use in their e-juices? In an article by [Project Know](#), electronic cigarettes still give off carcinogens. If you are not sure what carcinogens are; they increase the chances of you getting cancer.

Also, vaporizers use E-liquids, most of which contain nicotine – nicotine it is an extremely dangerous chemical. Surprisingly, it is more dangerous than tobacco leaves.

Nicotine can be fatal; it's noted that a lethal amount is around 40mg for an adult. A report in the [Public Health England](#) mentioned that if you were to drink a 10ml bottle of e-juice with nicotine, the effects on your body would be permanent and almost fatal. Finally, using nicotine in any form is still addicting, its major problem is that it leads to addiction habits.

E-Cigarettes Act as Gateway to Smoking for Teens, Scientists Warn

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This is a common concern among many anti-vaping experts. Several [pieces of research and studies](#) have been conducted to prove this claim. The opposing group uses [the data from CDC](#) which shows that from the year 2011, e-cig use surged about tenfold in 2014 in high school kids. On the flip, the smoking ratio has gone from 15.8% to the lowest-ever 9.2% during the same period.

Although vaping isn't recognized by the FDA as a device to quit smoking, many use it to at least help curb their addiction. In fact, some new trends have formed, like "cloud chasing," "vape events" and "custom vape mods."

One of the biggest trends in the vaping community is "Cloud Chasers," it may sound a little straightforward. Though for those who don't get it, Cloud Chasers is a term which vapers use to describe someone who shoots to create the biggest, thickest vapor clouds. If you are curious about how these vape clouds are made, it is usually done using a VG (vegetable glycerin) juice. These special types of e-juice normally don't have nicotine in them. All in all, the juice is just used to create the largest clouds.

Fun Fact, some people have turned "cloud chasing" into a sport.

When you're not blasting out large vapor clouds, another pastime of vapor enthusiasts is to mod their favorite vaporizers. Basically, modding your vape means to change it from the stock form into something custom. Some people can go as far as using power tools on their atomizers to add airflow holes or just to customize it to their desired look and feel. As such, one of the most popular customizations that people invest into their vapes is to hire a graphic designer to enhance the look of their vaporizer artistically.

If you're curious about the latest vaping trends, don't forget to check the online vaping communities, check out local vape shops or vape events and meet fellow vapers in your area.

If you're curious about the types of vaporizers out there, here is a quick overview of the different types:

Common Types of Vaporizers

- **E-Cigs:** These are very simple basic devices, usually disposable, that you will see at gas stations. They come prefilled with e-liquid and are ideal for smokers who want to have a feel of vaping.
- **Vape Pens:** Vaporizer pens are slightly bigger and more powerful than e-cigs, and may or may not look like an actual pen. In fact, most new vape pens look like a thumb drive instead.
- **Vape Mods:** These are the most powerful portable vaporizers. They offer an insane amount of vapor and flavor.
Desktop Vaporizers: Are typically very big as well as very expensive but offer the best vaping experience. Desktop vapes are usually used to vape materials other than e-liquids i.e. dry herbs and oils.

There are four types of vapes depending on the material you want:

- **Vaporizers for E-Liquids:** Used for e-liquids, they can range from very small cig-a-likes to very powerful vape mods.
- **Dry Herb Vaporizer:** Are mainly used for cannabis, and mostly used for recreational purposes as well as for medicinal purposes.
- **Vaporizers for Waxes/Oily Concentrates:** Used for waxes as well as concentrates, these are the rather less common type of vaporizers.
Hybrid Vaporizers: Usually, the most expensive type of vapes are the ones that allow you to vape more than one materials.

What do you think about when it comes to how vapers should act in public, is it free game or should the same rules apply to vaping as smoking? Well, according to a survey done by **E-Cigarette Direct** you shouldn't vape where you wouldn't smoke. Overall, this is the basic rule of thumb.

What are some of the rules? First off, you shouldn't vape indoors that is a big "no-no" for most, and if you can, you should at least seek permission. Second, blowing vapor in people's face is always unacceptable. Stealth vaping is okay, but it is better just to follow the previous notes. Lastly, vaping around children is never recommended, but most think it is okay if respect is taken in regards to location.

Fun fact, "Vape" was the word of the year in 2014.

Frankly as mentioned before, respecting non-smokers and even a smoker is the key to good etiquette. Just don't be a "vape snob" or leave your equipment unattended. Most importantly, be considerate and use common sense.

To sum up:

- Don't vape indoors
- Blowing vapor in people's face is a big "no-no"
- You should seek permission before vaping in certain locations
- Stealth vaping is okay, though it's better to follow previous notes
- Vaping around children isn't recommended
- Don't be a "vape snob" and think your better
- Don't leave your equipment unattended
- Use common sense and be considerate

We now know what is banned by society and the vaping community. But, what does the government say? First of all, vaping is slowly getting banned in the US, while in other countries the rules and regulations are either not in place or not very clear. In the US, each state has their rules and regulations; you can take a quick look at the [current bans in different states of the US here](#). On the federal level, the FDA has started treating vaporizers as cigarettes starting August 2016. So far, sales have been banned to minors only, and e-cigs are now subject to regulation under FDCA before they can be imported into the country.

In some countries including Brazil, Seychelles, Singapore, Norway, Uruguay, etc. – e-cigs are banned. Canada has a law that prohibits the sale of any fluids that contain nicotine. However, non-nicotine e-liquids are still sold country-wide, and the law as a whole hasn't been enforced. In the UK, the sale of e-cigarettes is legal to adults only. In 2014, European Parliament passed a law to force the manufacturers to use childproof packaging for e-liquids and disclose the ingredients used.

Fun Fact, 6.1 million Europeans have quit smoking with the help of e-cigs.

Also, the regulations can depend on any facility you are in, so it's better to ask around before using your e-cig in a restaurant or any other public place.

Despite the recent roadblocks by the FDA and government to decimate the vaping industry, the industry is growing at a rapid pace. From just a \$20 million industry in 2008 to a \$2 billion industry in 2016. It's expected to hit \$10 billion by the end of 2017.

How much will the industry grow? Different pieces of research have a huge variance in their predictions. According to the report "[Global Vape Market – Strategic Assessment and Forecast Till 2011](#)" by Research and Markets, the vaping industry worldwide is expected to cross \$32 billion by the year 2021. On the flip, Bloomberg has given a much larger number and predicted that the industry would hit \$100 billion by 2020.

Fun Fact, About 9 million adults, vape regularly in the U.S.

Recent acquisitions and technology advancements have put the industry on the right foot. In the US alone, there are more than 5,500 vape shops already, which are small, independent businesses bringing variety to the consumer.

What about our health, isn't this what is up for debate? With all the conflicting reports on how vaping truly affects us it is a hard topic to figure out.

Ask any expert, and they will tell you smoking is extremely dangerous and lethal. However, ask the same question about vaping, and you might get as many answers as the number of people you ask.

Fun Fact, Vaping too much or too often can cause Vapor Tongue.

There has been some scientific evidence that vaping might have the potential for harm reduction from tobacco cigarettes, but then there are people who have several concerns. In face, this makes answering the question directly nearly impossible – at least at this point. It's just a matter of time before things become clearer as the research is going on at a decent pace.

[Hidden Formaldehyde in E-Cigarette Aerosols](#)

Published: January 22, 2015

A rather controversial study published in The New England Journal of Medicine claimed that aerosol or vapor produce by e-cigs contains formaldehyde – a known carcinogen. Here's an excerpt from the study:

We have observed that formaldehyde-containing hemiacetals, shown by others to be entities that are detectable by means of nuclear magnetic resonance (NMR) spectroscopy, can be formed during the e-cigarette "vaping" process.

Finally, we need to understand that even the safest foods we eat aren't 100%. You might be surprised to know that coffee contains an addictive stimulant plus 22 known carcinogens. If you care about your health, the only thing you should be inhaling is fresh air. But if you want to know whether vaping is the lesser of the two evils or not, instead of writing a conclusion myself, I'll [**quote Professor Kevin Fenton**](#) (Director of Health and Wellbeing at PHE) narrative:

E-cigarettes are not completely risk-free, but when compared to smoking, evidence shows they carry just a fraction of the harm. The problem is people increasingly think they are at least as harmful and this may be keeping millions of smokers from quitting. Local stop smoking services should look to support e-cigarette users in their journey to quitting completely. [Professor Kevin Fenton](#)

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