

Electronic Cigarettes

You've seen them by now: electronic cigarettes (e-cigs) that come in many varieties and are intended to help one kick the tobacco habit. The e-cig is a lithium battery-powered device that heats liquid into vapor. The liquid often contains varying amounts of nicotine, allowing the user to slowly decrease the levels, ultimately to zero. One report¹ indicates this is a \$1.8 billion (yes, that is with a B) per year business! Use of the cigarettes produces an odorless water vapor, allowing users to "smoke" the cigarettes in public places without offending other people. Marijuana users have found they can use the e-cigs to get high by loading them with cannabis oil, liquid, or wax that can be inhaled. Users can make their own hash liquid and put it inside the e-cig, allowing them to get high in public places without being detected. There are currently no FDA regulations regarding the use of e-cigs, so there is no way for consumers to be sure about their safety, whether they contain nicotine or marijuana. The use of e-cigs by youth is growing, and what's in there may not be as harmless as you think.

USA Today reports that some major airports permit the use of e-cigarettes inside. For example, Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport, Las Vegas' McCarran International Airport, Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport and Charlotte Douglas International Airport are among airports that permit the use of e-cigarettes inside. Miami International Airport has given the OK for now, but says it is reviewing its policy.

San Francisco International Airport, Chicago's airports, Philadelphia International Airport and Los Angeles International Airport treat e-cigarettes the same as tobacco cigarettes and have banned their use inside, except for in smoking-designated areas.

To make things more confusing, New York City's LaGuardia International and John F. Kennedy International airports both ban and permit e-cigarette use — depending on the terminal you're in!

New York City and Chicago are considering laws to ban e-cigarette use in public spaces, treating the device the same as tobacco cigarettes. If the measure passes in New York, e-cigarette use will no longer be allowed in any of the airports' public spaces.

The FDA tested samples of the nicotine liquid solution vaporized by e-cigarettes and found "detectable levels of known carcinogens and toxic chemicals," according to a 2009 report from the agency.



¹ <http://nation.time.com/2013/10/11/smokers-are-using-e-cigarettes-to-get-high/#ixzz2kjhpW9SH>

Sources: Dec. 2013 Solutions Newsletter, National Center for Prevention and Research Solutions; CADCA