

# Users believe electronic cigarettes can help you quit

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Electronic cigarettes, or 'E-cigarettes', are used mainly to quit smoking, and may be useful for this purpose. Researchers writing in the open access journal *BMC Public Health* polled 81 users and former users of the devices, finding that although the majority was happy with them, several concerns remain unaddressed.

Jean-François Etter, from the University of Geneva, Switzerland, carried out the research. He said, "Currently, there is a difficult balance between the need to protect [consumers](#) and the possibility now being offered to [smokers](#) to use a new, acceptable and potentially effective device to stop smoking. Given the enormous burden of disease and death caused by [tobacco smoking](#), there is an urgent need for research into the toxicity, efficacy and public health impact of e-cigarettes".

Almost all of the respondents (95%) had found e-cigarettes at least somewhat helpful to stop smoking. However, users were concerned about potential toxicity. Poor quality, lack of reliability and frequent failures were also mentioned by several of the people surveyed.

Summarizing the responses, Etter said, "Although users' comments were generally positive, many were concerned about safety and toxicity, and questioned why no study has yet investigated these aspects. Several respondents were also concerned about the future legal status of e-cigarettes, and that they may possibly be banned. Very few studies have investigated these devices and research is now urgently required".

**More information:** Electronic cigarettes: a survey of users Jean-

Francois Etter BMC Public Health (in press),  
[www.biomedcentral.com/bmcpublichealth/](http://www.biomedcentral.com/bmcpublichealth/)

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