

Philippines warns against e-cigarette use

April 12 2013

The Philippine health department warned the public on Friday against electronic cigarettes, saying the tobacco substitute could turn children into smokers.

E-cigarettes have been gaining favour among Filipinos as higher [tobacco taxes](#) make smoking more expensive.

[Food and Drug Administration](#) director-general Kenneth Hartigan-Go disputed what he said were claims by vendors that electronic cigarettes helped smokers kick the habit.

"Wittingly or unwittingly, the electronic cigarette promotes smoking among children and the youth. It makes them less fearful of hazards and risks of smoking," he said in a health advisory posted on its website Friday.

"The public is advised NOT to smoke at all and NOT to use cigarettes, cigars, or e-cigarettes," added Hartigan-Go, who could not be reached for comment Friday.

Nearly one in five Filipinos smokes, according to the health department.

A law that came in effect this year will gradually raise the tax on [cigarettes](#) over five years, which would roughly double the price per pack to about 52 pesos (\$1.27) by 2017.

A basic e-cigarette kit in the Philippines costs as little as \$24, featuring a

battery-powered vaporiser that delivers a [nicotine](#)-laced mist.

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