

Study finds that smokers who try e-cigarettes to quit are younger and more motivated to quit

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University of Hawaii Cancer Center Prevention and Control Program researchers Pallav Pokhrel, PhD and Thaddeus Herzog, PhD have found that smokers who use e-cigarettes as a tool to stop smoking tend to be younger and more motivated to quit smoking as compared to other smokers.

Their study published online ahead of the print version in the *American Journal of Public Health*, found that approximately 13 percent of smokers had tried e-cigarettes as a means of quitting smoking. They also found that smokers who had tried e-cigarettes for smoking cessation help were younger and had been smoking for fewer years compared to other smokers.

The Hawaii-based survey analyzed responses from self-identified smokers who had consumed at least three cigarettes per day and at least 100 cigarettes in their lifetime. The survey asked participants if they had ever used e-cigarettes to quit smoking and captured additional demographic information. The study also assessed participants' [nicotine dependence](#), number of quit attempts in the past, and motivation to quit smoking.

"If e-cigarettes are found to be relatively safer and effective as cessation aids, the appeal that they have for younger adults should be used to enhance [smoking cessation](#) among younger smokers," said Dr. Pokhrel.

"Conversely, if e-cigarettes are ineffective as cessation aids and are potentially a risk, strategies need to be developed to help younger smokers find effective cessation aids."

The study also found that Native Hawaiians were significantly less likely to use e-cigarettes than whites. Smokers who had used nicotine replacement gum, patches, bupropion, or [varenicline](#) were 2 to 4 times more likely to have used e-cigarettes as cessation aids. Further analysis revealed that motivation to quit smoking was higher among those who tried e-cigarettes than those who tried other cessation aids such as [nicotine replacement](#) gum or patches.

"Despite the lack of firm evidence regarding safety or effectiveness, e-cigarettes appear to have become cessation aids of choice for some smokers who appear to show a relatively higher motivation to quit smoking," said Dr. Herzog. "Thus, this study confirms the importance of promptly developing appropriate e-cigarette regulations that address smokers' use of e-cigarettes as cessation products," Herzog concluded.

More information: [doi: 10.2105/AJPH.2013.301453](https://doi.org/10.2105/AJPH.2013.301453)

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