

Surge in e-cigarette use triggers new health research and calls for regulation

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Sales of e-cigarettes, which emerged on the U.S. market less than 10 years ago, are booming, reaching an estimated \$2.2 billion in 2014. But very little is known about their potential health risks or benefits.

Scientists, health advocates, regulators and lawmakers are struggling to weigh the potential promises and threats of the popular products, according to an article in *Chemical & Engineering News (C&EN)*, the weekly newsmagazine of the American Chemical Society.

Britt E. Erickson, a senior editor at C&EN, notes that [e-cigarettes](#) are still controversial. They are often touted as a way to help people quit smoking traditional cigarettes. And preliminary studies show e-cigarette users have lower levels of nicotine-derived and tobacco-related cancer-causing compounds in their urine than regular cigarette smokers.

However, there are doubts about how safe some of the ingredients, such as cinnamon, are to inhale in aerosol form even though they might be safe to eat. A few of the flavorings, when breathed in, have been associated with respiratory disease. Ongoing studies are attempting to further flesh out potential health issues.

Currently, the U.S. only regulates e-cigarettes and related products that make therapeutic claims. But the Food and Drug Administration is considering a proposed rule to regulate the devices as tobacco products. The move, if approved, would prohibit sales to minors, and require health warnings and ingredient disclosures.

More information: "Boom in E-Cigarettes Sparks Concern" -

cen.acs.org/articles/93/i7/Boo...es-Sparks-Calls.html

Provided by American Chemical Society

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