

E-cigarettes research shows clear benefits of switching from tobacco

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Latest figures from the WHO show that smoking is still the number one preventable disease, killing seven million people globally each year.

Stoptober is timely for Senior Lecturer Alexis Bailey who has presented preliminary results from his research on e-cigarettes at SRNT, the top nicotine and tobacco research conference, in Munich last month.

There has been a meteoric rise of electric cigarette use in the UK since their introduction in 2006. In the UK, e-cigarettes are used by smokers to help them stop smoking as well as by former smokers, and it is estimated that there are 3.2 million [e-cigarette](#) users in the UK alone.

However E-cigarette safety has been a subject of debate. Dr. Bailey's observational study, "SmokeFreeBrain," assessed the effect of [heavy smokers](#) switching from cigarettes to e-cigarettes for 28 days. The team measured several parameters including psychometric, cardiovascular, quality of life, brain activity and biomarkers of toxicity.

Findings from the 31 subjects who completed the study showed subtle but significant changes in psychometric parameters and a considerable reduction in biomarkers of toxicity. Switching from cigarettes to e-cigarettes reduced the craving to smoke and affected brain regions associated with addiction. Exposure to nicotine was also significantly reduced as well as tobacco specific nitrosamines, cigarette biomarkers of toxicity demonstrating prominent harm reduction following switching to e-cigarettes.

Dr. Bailey said: "Our preliminary findings support electronic cigarettes as an effective way of stopping smoking, quickly inducing beneficial changes in various measures of psychometric health and the craving to smoke.

"Nonetheless, caution has to be taken over their use. E-cigarettes are not without risks and there is an ever-expanding growth of new products on the market."

Provided by St. George's University of London

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