

Study suggests vaping can reduce cigarette smoking, but also leads to higher relapse

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A team of researchers affiliated with several institutions in France has found evidence that suggests vaping can be used as a way to reduce cigarette smoking, but it can also lead to relapse. In their paper published

in the *Journal of the American Medical Association*, the group describes their study involving thousands of volunteers over a nearly two-year period.

Scientists have been looking into the dangers associated with smoking using [electronic cigarettes](#) as vaping rates have continued to rise, particularly among young people. Companies that make [e-cigarettes](#) have suggested that vaping is less dangerous than tobacco-based cigarettes, even when users consume nicotine-based products, because they do not have the cancer-causing chemicals that are found in tobacco-based products. Because of that, some have suggested that vaping could be used as a means to help people quit smoking cigarettes. In this new effort, the researchers carried out a study to find out if vaping does help people stop smoking regular cigarettes and what impact it might have on relapse.

The study involved tracking the smoking habits of 5,400 daily smokers in France over the course of almost two years. Smokers included both [cigarette smokers](#) and vapers. The researchers also included 2,025 people who considered themselves former smokers—most of whom were vaping.

The researchers report that they found an association between regular vaping and a [significant decrease](#) in smoking cigarettes. But they also found that those users who quit smoking cigarettes by switching to e-cigarettes were more likely to relapse to smoking cigarettes than were those who had quit smoking altogether—at least within the two-year study timeframe. They acknowledge that they found no evidence that would explain why vaping heightened the risk of relapse, but suggest it is possible that people go back to cigarettes because they do not find vaping as satisfying as cigarette smoking.

The researchers conclude by suggesting their findings indicate that

[vaping](#) might be an effective cigarette [smoking](#) cessation technique, but caution that other tools may be needed to prevent relapse.

More information: Ramchandar Gomajee et al. Association Between Electronic Cigarette Use and Smoking Reduction in France, *JAMA Internal Medicine* (2019). [DOI: 10.1001/jamainternmed.2019.1483](https://doi.org/10.1001/jamainternmed.2019.1483)

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