

Flavoured vapes less harmful to young people than smoking, and could help teen smokers quit

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Flavored vapes are much less harmful to young people than smoking, and could help teen smokers quit tobacco—according to new research

from the University of East Anglia.

A new study published today looks at young peoples' use of vape flavors, reporting the views and experiences of more than 500,000 under 18s.

It finds that flavors are an important aspect of vaping that [young people](#) enjoy, suggesting that flavored products may help them switch away from harmful tobacco [smoking](#).

But the researchers warn that more needs to be done to make sure that youngsters who have never smoked are not attracted to vaping.

Lead researcher, Prof Caitlin Notley, from UEA's Norwich Medical School, said: "There has been a lot of concern that young people may start vaping because they are attracted to e-liquid flavors, and that it could potentially lead them to start smoking tobacco.

"We wanted to find out more about the links between vape flavors, the uptake of vaping among young people, and whether it leads to regular vaping and, potentially, tobacco smoking."

The research team studied all available evidence (58 studies) on young peoples' use of e-liquid flavors.

Prof Notley said: "We found that flavored e-liquids are an important aspect of vaping that young people enjoy. This suggests that flavored products may encourage young people to switch away from harmful tobacco smoking towards less harmful vaping.

"Flavors may be an important motivator for e-cigarette uptake—but we found no evidence that using flavored e-liquids attracted young people to go on to take up tobacco smoking.

"And we also found no adverse effects or harm caused by using liquid vape flavors. "However, there is also a need to monitor [flavor](#) use to ensure that young people who have never smoked are not attracted to taking up vaping.

"Ensuring the continued availability of a range of e-liquid flavors is likely to be important in encouraging young people who smoke to switch to vaping as a less harmful alternative," she added.

The team found that the overall quality of the evidence on use of e-cigarette flavors by young people was low. In particular, many studies did not clearly define [e-liquid](#) flavors and could not therefore be included within the review.

The study was led by UEA in collaboration with researchers at University College London, the University of Bristol and University Hospitals Bristol and Weston NHS Foundation Trust.

"Youth Use of E-Liquid Flavors—A [systematic review](#) exploring patterns of use of e liquid flavors and associations with continued [vaping](#) , [tobacco](#) smoking uptake, or cessation" is [published](#) in the journal *Addiction* on November 17, 2021.

Provided by University of East Anglia

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