

Sales of cigars using the 'natural' descriptor are increasing, researchers find

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Sales of cigars using the "natural" descriptor are increasing, according to

Rutgers researchers.

"Sales of cigars with a 'natural' descriptor are both prominent and growing," said Ollie Ganz, an instructor in the Department of Health, Behavior, Society and Policy at the Rutgers School of Public Health and the lead author of a study published in the journal *Tobacco Control*.

"This is concerning because we know from previous research that that the term 'natural' can decrease harm perceptions of the product, increase its appeal and influence people's beliefs about the quality of the product and its users."

The study examined cigar sales data to assess [trends](#) in the sales of cigars that claimed to be natural in the packaging. They found that sales of cigars claiming to be natural increased at a faster pace—from 22.3 percent in 2017 to 33.9 percent in 2021—than sales of cigars not making the same claim.

Researchers from the Rutgers Center for Tobacco Studies analyzed retailer scanner data on features such as brand, flavor, pack size and claims like "natural" that are printed on unique packages sold to consumers.

Future research should examine the use of potentially misleading descriptors specifically on cigar packaging and advertising and its potential impact on [consumer perceptions](#) and behaviors.

"The FDA should consider policies that restrict the use of potentially misleading descriptors such as 'natural' in [cigar](#) marketing, as well as communication efforts to counter misperceptions of harm resulting from the use of these descriptors," Ganz said.

Co-authors of the study include faculty members from the Rutgers Center for Tobacco Studies, Rutgers School of Public Health and the

University of Pennsylvania.

More information: Ollie Ganz et al, Emergence and growth of 'natural' cigars in the USA, *Tobacco Control* (2022). [DOI: 10.1136/tobaccocontrol-2022-057396](https://doi.org/10.1136/tobaccocontrol-2022-057396)

Provided by Rutgers University

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