

E-cigarettes boost tobacco use abstinence with smoking cessation counseling

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The addition of electronic cigarettes to standard smoking-cessation counseling results in greater abstinence from tobacco use among smokers than smoking-cessation counseling alone, according to a [study](#) published in the Feb. 15 issue of the *New England Journal of Medicine*.

Reto Auer, M.D., from Bern University Hospital in Switzerland, and colleagues randomly assigned adults who were smoking at least five tobacco cigarettes per day and who wanted to set a quit date to an intervention group (622 participants; free e-cigarettes and e-liquids, standard-of-care smoking-cessation counseling, and optional [not free]

[nicotine](#)-replacement therapy) or to a control group (624 participants), who received standard counseling and a voucher.

The researchers found that 28.9 percent of participants in the intervention group had validated continuous abstinence from tobacco smoking versus 16.3 percent in the control group (relative risk, 1.77). In the intervention group, 59.6 percent of participants abstained from smoking in the seven days before the six-month visit versus 38.5 percent in the control group.

Compared with the control group, fewer in the intervention group abstained from any nicotine (33.7 versus 20.1 percent). Adverse events occurred in 43.7 percent of the [intervention group](#) and 36.7 percent in the [control group](#), while 4.0 and 5.0 percent, respectively, had serious adverse events.

"Electronic nicotine-delivery systems plus standard counseling may be a viable option for tobacco smokers who want to abstain from smoking without necessarily abstaining from nicotine but may be less appropriate for those who want to abstain from both tobacco and nicotine," the authors write.

More information: Reto Auer et al, Electronic Nicotine-Delivery Systems for Smoking Cessation, *New England Journal of Medicine* (2024). [DOI: 10.1056/NEJMoa2308815](https://doi.org/10.1056/NEJMoa2308815)

Nancy A. Rigotti, Electronic Cigarettes for Smoking Cessation—Have We Reached a Tipping Point?, *New England Journal of Medicine* (2024). [DOI: 10.1056/NEJMe2314977](https://doi.org/10.1056/NEJMe2314977)

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