



NB anti-tobacco  
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## Electronic Cigarettes

**Tobacco Free. Everyone. Everywhere.**

### What is an electronic cigarette?

Electronic cigarettes are also known as e-cigarettes or e-cigs. They are battery operated devices that are designed to look and feel like a real cigarette, many even have a glowing red tip.

Most consist of three main components:

1. Cartridge: A small replaceable plastic cartridge containing a liquid solution that is usually made up of a mixture of water and flavorings in a propylene glycol base. Some cartridges may also contain nicotine (these are not legal in Canada) and are available in hundreds of flavors such as vanilla, strawberry, peanut, bubble gum, etc.
2. Atomizer: A heating element used to vaporize the liquid.
3. Rechargeable battery.



### How do e-cigarettes work?

When the user inhales, a small amount of the liquid from the cartridge is drawn into the atomizer where it turns to vapor. The vapor is then inhaled into the lungs giving the user a feeling of smoking a real cigarette.

### References

- World Health Organization (2008). News Release: Marketers of Electronic Cigarettes Should Halt Unproven Therapy Claims: <http://www.who.int/mediacentre/news/releases/2008/pr34/en/index.html>.
- Health Canada (2009). Health Canada Advises Canadians Not to Use Electronic Cigarettes. <http://www.healthycanadians.gc.ca/recall-alert-rappel-avis/hc-sc/2009/13373a-eng.php>.
- Health Canada (2009). Notice- To All Persons Interested in Importing, Advertising or Selling Electronic Smoking Products in Canada. [http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/dhp-mps/prodpharma/applic-demande/pol/notice\\_avis\\_e-cig-eng.php](http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/dhp-mps/prodpharma/applic-demande/pol/notice_avis_e-cig-eng.php)

### Are e-cigarettes safe?

- Health Canada and the World Health Organization do not recommend the purchase or use of electronic cigarettes because of the potential health risks and the lack of testing for safety, quality and efficacy.
- Like conventional cigarette smoking, the use of electronic cigarettes provides a negative example. Role modeling tobacco free lifestyles is important in building healthy habits especially in children.
- Electronic cigarettes may pose risks such as nicotine poisoning and addiction.
- Nicotine is known to be particularly hazardous to the health and safety of children, youth, pregnant women, nursing mothers, people with heart conditions and the elderly.
- Due to the risk of nicotine poisoning and choking, electronic cigarettes and their cartridges must be kept out of reach of children at all times.
- E-cigarettes carry a risk of explosion as a result of battery failure.

### Will e-cigarettes help me quit?

Despite many personal testimonials, there is no scientific evidence to support the use of e-cigarettes to quit smoking. There are however, a number of approved cessation aids that have been proven safe and effective such as nicotine patches, gum, inhalers and lozenges.

Any electronic cigarette that contains nicotine or makes a health claim such as helping to quit smoking cannot be imported or sold in Canada.

Complaints involving electronic cigarettes should be directed to the Health Products and Food Branch Inspectorate by calling 1-800-267-9675.

### Contact us!

Phone: 506-832-3857  
Fax: 506-832-3011  
Email: [admin@nbatc.ca](mailto:admin@nbatc.ca)  
Website: [www.nbatc.ca](http://www.nbatc.ca)  
PO Box 1372  
Hampton, NB  
E5N 8H3