E-CIGARETTES: WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

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WHAT’S INSIDE AN E-CIGARETTE?
- E-cigarettes contain a tank filled with a nicotine-containing fluid.
- A heating element heats the fluid and turns it into a vapor.
- The user activates the device with a button that causes the device to make the aerosol.
- They contain a battery that is either disposable or rechargeable.

BENEFITS:
- E-cigarettes may help people who already smoke quit or cut down on the number of tobacco cigarettes they use.
- The safety of e-cigarettes has not been proven as e-cigarettes haven’t existed long enough to study the long-term harms and benefits.

HARMS:
- E-cigarettes contain nicotine, which is a very addictive chemical. It is especially addictive in adolescents.
- Nicotine harms normal brain development from birth through the mid-twenties. Nicotine use during this period can cause permanent problems with attention, mood, learning and addiction.
- Even though nicotine may feel relaxing while it is smoked, it contributes to the body’s overall stress level.
- E-cigarettes contain many other chemicals that are known to cause cancer and other permanent lung damage. Some of these chemicals include flavorings such as diacetyl, a chemical linked to bronchiolitis obliterans (also called “popcorn lung”).
- The aerosol from e-cigarettes can also harm people who are around users.
- The liquid used for e-cigarettes can cause acute poisoning when it is swallowed or spilled on the skin. It has caused severe illness and even death in children who got into it by accident.
- E-cigarettes are not safe for pregnant women.

BOTTOM LINE:
- E-cigarettes are not safe for youth, young adults or pregnant women.
- They may help adult smokers quit using regular cigarettes, which are probably more harmful than e-cigarettes.
- You should speak with your physician if you have questions about the medical benefits or harms of e-cigarettes.

SOURCE(S):
The American Academy of Pediatrics, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention e-cigarettes.surgeongeneral.gov