



# ELECTRONIC CIGARETTES

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## WHAT DOES IT LOOK LIKE?

Electronic cigarettes are battery powered devices that are produced to mimic usual cigarette smoking by producing a vapour. Some are designed to look like cigarettes whilst others look like pens often with a red glowing tip when inhaled.

## HOW IS IT USED?

They are inhaled similar as to if someone was having a cigarette. The device contains what is called an atomiser which heats nicotine and a liquid based solution to make the vapour.

## WHAT ARE THE EFFECTS AND RISKS?

Most e-cigarettes contain nicotine but the actual amount varies. Nicotine itself is the addictive drug found in tobacco and can be hard to quit just like traditional cigarettes. Public Health England concluded in a report recently that they are 95% safer than tobacco but because they are still relatively new, it is difficult to predict long term risks. The report also said that overall, they are not a gateway to smoking traditional cigarettes for young people or non-smokers.

## WHAT DOES THE LAW SAY?

E-cigarettes are designed to help quit smoking and should not be used by those who are under the age of 18 (even those with zero nicotine). Shops are not allowed to sell to anyone under the age of 18 or to adults who intend to buy them on behalf of under-18s. For over 18s, it is legal to buy and can be consumed in public places as long as property owners and managers do not object. E-cigarettes became regulated in 2016 to make them more safe so that people have the information they need to make informed choices.