



Does Vaping Make Coronavirus More Dangerous?

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There is no link between nicotine in e-cigarettes and E-cigarette of Vaping Product-Use Associated Lung Injury (EVALI). EVALI cases have been traced to vitamin E acetate, used as a solvent for THC in black market vaping products. Flavored vaping products are preferred by adults who switch from combustible tobacco smoking to vaping. Yet none of these facts prevented a federal ban on flavored vaping products from going into effect last February. Not satisfied with a ban on flavored products, vaping opponents are now trying to leverage fear of COVID-19 infection as a means of preventing many adults from choosing to engage in an activity they find pleasurable.

A study published in the Journal of Adolescent Health looked at a national sample of adolescents and young adults and concluded:

“The findings from a national sample of adolescents and young adults show that electronic cigarette use and dual use of electronic cigarettes and cigarettes are significant underlying risk factors for coronavirus disease... Being diagnosed with Covid-19 was five times more likely among young people who have used e-cigarettes ever.”

“...who have used e-cigarettes ever.” Does that mean that if a person tries an e-cigarette at a party and never does so again, that person is still at greater risk of contracting COVID-19?

Bear in mind that it has been illegal to sell vaping products to persons under age 18 since 2016.

Michelle Minton of the Competitive Enterprise Institute complained to Filter Magazine that the e-cigarette users in the study had three times the COVID testing rate of 13 to 24-year-olds:

“Had the authors calculated risk based on testing rates, it would have shown *no* difference in COVID-19 cases between e-cigarette users and non-users. But, that’s not how the authors chose to report their results.”

Leading Greek vaping research Konstantinos Farsalinos tweeted, “The study suggests that approx 40% of all diagnostic tests for COVID until May 14 were performed in 13–24 year olds.”

As soon as news of the study reached Congressman Raja Krishnamoorthy (D-IL), a big opponent of vaping, he sent a letter on behalf of the House Subcommittee on Economic and Consumer Policy to Food and Drug Administration Commissioner Stephen Hahn that stated:

In view of this national study proving our worst fears, I respectfully reiterate my call on FDA to clear the market of all e-cigarettes for the duration of the coronavirus crisis. It is the only responsible path forward.

The Subcommittee requests that you confirm, in writing, by August 18, 2020 whether or not the FDA will temporarily clear the market of all e-cigarettes, and assuming it will, provide a written description of the FDA's plan to do so.

We've seen this movie before. As with "reefer madness" and other drug war hysterics, vapophobia and e-cigarette prohibition will only fuel a nascent and growing underground market. It will also deprive tobacco smokers of an effective means of harm reduction as they try to quit that decidedly unhealthy activity.

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