

Use of 'Elf Bar' among youth and young adults who currently vape in England: cross-sectional associations with demographics, dependence indicators, and reasons for use

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Abstract

Background and aims: Elf Bar is currently the leading e-cigarette (vape) brand in Great Britain. This study examined youth and young adults' use of Elf Bar, socio-demographic characteristics and dependence indicators and reasons for use over other brands.

Design: Cross-sectional survey.

Setting and participants: Online 2022 International Tobacco Control Project Youth Tobacco and Vaping Survey (N = 1355 16-29-year-olds in England who had vaped in the past 30 days).

Measurements: Currently using Elf Bar most often (versus other brands) and associations with: socio-demographics, owning a vaping device, dependence indicators and reasons for brand choice. Logistic regressions were used.

Findings: Among 16–29-year-olds who vaped in the past 30 days, 48.4% (n = 732) reported Elf Bar as the brand they used most often. Among 16–17-year-olds, 40.7% used Elf Bar over other brands; this was lower than among 18–19-year-olds (60.1%) and 20–29-year-olds (47.4%) ($P = 0.002$). Using Elf Bar over other brands was higher among those who were female (55.2 versus 41.5% male), identified as White (53.1 versus 30.9% other/mixed), a student (54.5 versus 44.3% not), did not own a vape (66.7 versus 44.4% who did) and typically vaped 5–8 hours after waking (62.7 versus 36.8% within 5 min) ($P = 0.044$). Most who vaped but had never smoked used Elf Bar (64.3%), although use did not significantly differ from those who currently (45.4%), formerly (42.3%) or experimentally (48.7%) smoked (all $P = 0.060$). Popular reasons for choosing Elf Bar over other brands were better flavour/taste (47.5%), less expensive (28.7%), easier to get (26.1%), smoother to inhale (24.0%) and popularity (23.1%). 'Better for quitting smoking' (10.1%) was least frequently selected reason for choosing Elf Bar over other brands.

Conclusions: Elf Bar brand e-cigarettes were used by approximately half of 16–29-year-olds who vaped in England in 2022 and was mainly chosen over other brands for subjective responses (e.g. flavour/taste), rather than for quitting smoking.

Recommended Citation

East, K.A., Taylor, E., Simonavicius, E., Reid, J.L., Burkhalter, R., McNeill, A., Hammond, D. (2024). Use of 'Elf Bar' among youth and young adults who currently vape in England: cross-sectional associations with demographics, dependence indicators, and reasons for use. *Addiction*, 1-9. doi: 10.1111/add.16463.

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