

Prevalence and correlates of negative side effects from vaping: Findings from the 2020 ITC Four Country Smoking and Vaping Survey

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Abstract

Introduction: This study examined prevalence and correlates of self-reported negative side effects from nicotine vaping product (NVP) use among people who currently or recently vape. **Methods:** This cross-sectional study analysed data from 3906 adults (aged 18+ years) from the 2020 ITC Four Country Smoking and Vaping Survey (Canada, US, England and Australia) who reported they had ever smoked cigarettes and were either currently vaping daily/weekly or had vaped in the last month. Participants were asked about experiencing and seeking medical advice for any negative side effects from vaping in the past month. Logistic regressions were used to estimate prevalence and identify correlates. **Results:** Overall, 87.1 % reported no negative side effects from vaping. The most common side effects were throat irritation (5.8 %), cough (5.5 %), and mouth irritation (4.1 %). The top two that led to seeking medical advice were: mouth irritation (46.8 %) and loss of taste (45.2 %). Those more likely to self-report side effects were younger, male, currently smoking (vs quit), vaping for <6 months (vs >1 year), using disposables or cartridges/ pods (vs tanks), using vapes with nicotine (vs without nicotine), using menthol/mint flavour (vs sweet flavour), currently smoking (vs quit), believing vaping causes various diseases (e.g., heart disease), and believing that vaping is equally/more harmful than smoking. **Conclusion:** Negative side effects associated with NVP use were rare and mainly minor in all four countries. Shorter duration of vaping, concurrent smoking while vaping and perceptions of greater vaping harms relative to smoking were associated with more reported negative side effects attributed to vaping.

Recommended Citation

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