

Electronic Cigarettes and Oral Health

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Since 1950, society has followed a constant growth in the popularization of smoking; this habit is considered by the World Health Organization, the main preventable cause of death, being responsible for more than 8 million deaths a year in the world. From the mid 1990s, numerous public policies were implemented to combat tobacco, which led to the development of various nicotine replacement therapies, such as the use of electronic cigarettes.

In December 2022, I had the opportunity to participate as an evaluator of a dentistry work, which carried out a critical analysis regarding the functionality and effectiveness of electronic smoking devices, aiming to understand the alleged effectiveness and harmlessness of this method, which provided me with an understanding of the systemic and oral implications resulting from its use.

The work consisted of a bibliographical survey between 2017 and 2022, and it mentioned toxicological studies that have identified high variability of toxic chemical substances present in the aerosol of electronic cigarettes, as well as in vitro studies that showed that electronic cigarettes contain a large variety of bioactive agents that potentially induce harmful effects in cells, being harmful to systemic and oral health.

Some studies point lower toxicity of these products compared to common cigarettes, however, they cannot be considered harmless. It is evident that the risks contained in smoking activity, even if by handcuffed therapeutic practice, outweigh the benefits defended by the electronic cigarette industries.

It is essential that oral health professionals know the risks to which patients are exposed when using electronic cigarettes; not only to identify and treat possible clinical consequences, but also to know how to argue in the face of any doubtful statements due to the great variability of electronic cigarettes, since the studies remain below the ideal, but suggest damage to human health.

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