E-Cigarettes and Smoking Cessation
A primer for oncology clinicians

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BACKGROUND: Electronic cigarettes (e-cigarettes) are a psychosocial phenomenon of the 21st century with serious implications to public and individual health. The significant increase of their popularity and use has raised concerns in the healthcare community regarding their potential benefits and harm, particularly their use as a smoking cessation methodology.

OBJECTIVES: Current knowledge is presented about e-cigarettes, including the clinical implications of their use, and associated controversies are analyzed. In addition, practice recommendations and communication guidance are provided.

METHODS: An integrative review was performed.

FINDINGS: The long-term effect of e-cigarettes on individual and public health is unknown. Evidence from short-term studies, although limited, shows that e-cigarette use is less harmful than smoking. However, the evidence does not support the use of e-cigarettes as a smoking cessation methodology. Such recommendation remains a judgment call for the clinician based on each individual case.

KEYWORDS
electronic cigarette; e-cigarettes; smoking cessation; nicotine; harm reduction

DIGITAL OBJECT IDENTIFIER
10.1188/17.CJON.54-63