



Consumers Helping Others Improve Their Condition by Ending Smoking

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FDA Gives Marketing Approval to Some Electronic Cigarettes and Nicotine Pouches

By Azeem Sitabkhan and Dr. Jill Williams

In October of 2021, the FDA gave marketing approval to three e-cigarette products. Although every product has the potential for some risk, these are felt to carry a reduced risk compared to cigarettes because they don't burn. This means that they don't contain products of combustion (burning), that are some of the most dangerous toxins associated with smoking, like carbon monoxide. According to the Former Director of the FDA's Center for Tobacco Products Mitch Zeller, "The manufacturer's data demonstrates it's tobacco-flavored products could benefit addicted adult smokers who switch to these products - either completely or with a significant reduction in cigarette consumption - by reducing their exposure to harmful chemicals."



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Holistic Methods for Quitting Smoking

By Cleo Zifovski

All-Natural methods of quitting smoking have demonstrated some effectiveness; but a change in lifestyle is the best bet. Former smokers have outnumbered smokers since 2002. Instead of using conventional Western methods, such as prescription medications, many smokers opt to employ holistic ways. However, further research is required to completely comprehend how these strategies promote smoking cessation(1). Even though these all-natural methods of quitting smoking have demonstrated to be somewhat effective in reducing cravings and assisting users in getting over their dependence on tobacco products; more research is needed to show optimum effectiveness. What has been successfully used to aid with quitting smoking?

Your ability to stop smoking will be significantly impacted by changes in your way of life.

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After Quitting Smoking—Take up a Hobby!

by Deidre Stenard

In your new life as a non-smoker, you can take up a hobby. Hobbies fill the void left because you aren't smoking anymore, and you can choose something that you find pleasurable or fun! When I quit smoking, I collected shells from Florida to the South Pacific. I had some shells to begin with. I stored them in a medium-sized box that shielded the shells from the sun. I identified each shell using a shell collecting book from the South Pacific and stored them each in a plastic bag with a small white identification tag, to help protect the very special and rare



shells. I was able to get started with shell collecting with just a small investment. I think over the time I've been collecting shells, I've spent \$200 on shells. I still like inspecting my shells from time to time.

I got interested in a second hobby as well. Several years ago, I took watercolor classes at Princeton Adult School. Later, I also took an oil painting class at the Princeton Adult School as well. Over the past three years, I have taken several free art making courses through the Arts Council in Princeton in conjunction with the Princeton University Art Museum. These art classes really gave me a lot to look forward to on Thursday nights, especially during the pandemic. Taking a class is a great way to start a hobby. I got my start with very little money, but I had money saved from quitting smoking and that certainly helped to buy some art supplies. I now have my art framed all over my apartment. I also was fortunate enough to have a neighbor critique

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Chantix was the right CHOICE for me!

by Terrence H.

Smoking cessation treatment revolves around a recurring theme. As is applicable to all addiction therapies, abstinence from tobacco will most likely be the best way to proceed for individuals who are motivated to quit. Supportive organizations such as local quit centers and quit lines can provide clients with counseling and educational materials to sustain their quit attempts.

Chantix is one of the treatment options available for quitting smoking, and is what I chose to use in 2006, soon after it came out. That helped me quit for a year, and after a brief 2-month relapse, I chose to use it again in 2007. The initial step was to set a date to start the treatment regimen. I chose a realistic goal, and began Chantix one week before my quit date. It is recommended to take Chantix for at least 12 weeks, and then if possible, another 12 weeks to improve your chances for long term abstinence. Now I have quit for 15 years, and I feel great.

As with all medications, there are side effects, which are listed on the packaging. My side effects were minimal and included unusual dreams, but this was tolerable for me. I really didn't have any other issues that people sometimes report. If I had to do it again, I would use Chantix to help me quit. The great thing about Chantix is that it doesn't interfere with other medications. If you're reading this, and thinking about trying to quit, ask your doctor about the different options that are available to you.



Warning Signs to be Posted by Tobacco Companies

by Patricia Dooley Budsock



Under a federal court order, issued on December 6, 2022, the major U.S. tobacco companies will soon have to post signs telling the public the truth about the deadly consequences of cigarette smoking at nearly 200,000 stores where cigarettes are sold. The move comes after years of legal wrangling between the federal government and big tobacco companies and is seen as a victory in the tobacco control community. These signs are intended to inform customers of the health risks of smoking, so that they can consider this before purchasing cigarettes or other tobacco products.

These statements have previously been circulated through newspaper and television ads and on cigarette packs, and they continue to appear on tobacco company websites. The statements are intended to prevent and restrain future fraud by an industry that has lied to the American people for decades. These signs are scheduled to be posted by September of 2023, and are required to remain posted for a period of 21 months. It will be interesting to see if this occurs, as it has been something that has been stalled so many times, since the original ruling in 2006.

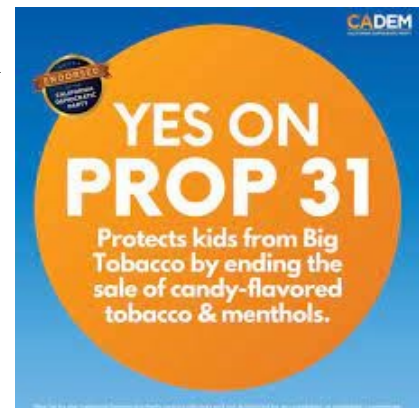
https://www.tobaccofreekids.org/press-releases/2022_12_06_court-order-store-signs



No More Menthol Cigarettes in California Per Proposition 31

by Lisa Evans

California voters passed legislation banning the sale of flavored cigarettes, including menthol, during the midterm elections.



And you ask, what does that mean to me, a menthol smoker in New Jersey?

First, menthol is a flavor that has unique properties that other cigarette flavors do not have. It is a natural chemical compound that can be found in peppermint plants and is also made in a laboratory. It creates a cooling sensation in your throat and lessens the harshness of cigarette smoke as you inhale. Per the CDC website, “Menthol enhances the effects of nicotine on the brain and can make tobacco products even more addictive. In recent years, tobacco companies also have increased the amount of nicotine in some menthol cigarettes.” California voters agreed that menthol-flavored cigarettes made it easier to smoke and harder to quit, hence increasing exposure to the toxic 7000 chemicals in cigarette smoke for smokers.

In addition to the health consequences, cigarette companies have historically targeted African Americans and other communities of color with predatory marketing of menthol. In the 1950’s less than 10% of African American smokers use menthol. Today more than 85% use menthol. The use of menthol cigarettes has increased in the

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Continued from page 1 FDA Gives Marketing Approval



Although there were more than 100,000 devices that applied for this authorization, so far only 3 have been granted marketing approval. These are the Vuse Solo, Logic Pro and Njoy. NO products that contain flavoring have been approved- all of these are tobacco flavor. This is on purpose to try and make them less attractive to young people. Juul and other flavored products have been denied this marketing approval. Although they have the potential to help some older smokers that have not been able to quit with traditional treatments, it seems okay to be skeptical. They are manufactured by the tobacco industry and using them will maintain nicotine addiction, although the amount of toxin exposure is much less. The FDA is also looking at other future strategies like lowering the amount of nicotine in cigarettes to levels that would no longer be addicting. There is one cigarette brand available now called VLN (Very Low Nicotine) that has 95% less nicotine than typical cigarettes. Using them would potentially help someone quit by breaking the cycle of nicotine addiction.

Switching from smoking to a pure nicotine pouch that you hold in your mouth like Zyn might also help some people to quit smoking. We always recommend that people use the evidence based treatments like NRT (patch, gum or lozenge) first, but these newer products may help by giving people more choices. Stay tuned for more updates.

Continued from page 3 No More Menthol

mental health community, low-income communities, and the LGBTQ+ community. Unfortunately, the tobacco company's efforts do not end there. To ensure a future market for their products, they are now using menthol products to attract young people and first-time users. The menthol flavoring makes the product less harsh, easier for kids to start smoking, and more addictive.

California is now the second state to end the sale of menthol cigarettes, flavored e-cigarettes, and cigars. Massachusetts was the first state. New Jersey, New York, and Rhode Island also banned the sale of flavored e-cigarettes. In total, 360 localities in the United States have restricted the sale of flavored products. In April 2022, the Federal Drug Administration proposed rules prohibiting the sale of menthol cigarettes and flavored cigars. There is legislation pending in New Jersey to ban the sale of menthol cigarettes. You can still purchase menthol cigarettes in New Jersey as of this writing.

So, what does this mean to you, a menthol smoker in New Jersey? It means that because menthol masks the harshness of cigarette smoke, you may smoke more intensely and have more exposure to its toxins, causing more significant damage to your health. It means that you are using a product that is known to be more addictive and harder to quit as compared to non-menthol cigarettes. It means that one day soon, you may not be able to purchase menthol cigarettes in New Jersey. Now that you know this, you will not wait for the ban on menthol cigarettes to happen. You will take charge of your health long before that day comes.

<https://www.fda.gov/news-events/press-announcements/fda-proposes-rules-prohibiting-menthol-cigarettes-and-flavored-cigars-prevent-youth-initiation>
https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/basic_information/menthol/index.html?CDC_AA_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Ftobacco%2Fbasic_information%2Ftobacco_industry%2Fmenthol-cigarettes%2Findex.html



Creatively Inclined

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my art and give me suggestions at times.

Both the shell collecting and the art making filled up time and filled the void left by the cigarettes.



CHOICES is proud of our peers who are creatively inclined in the arts, poetry, and writing. Are you an artist, poet, or writer and want to see your work in print? Do you have a stop smoking story?

We would love to share your artwork, poem, or story!

Please contact us via email at dooleypc@rutgers.edu

L.O.L! L.O.L! L.O.L!

by Terrance H

See answers below

1. Why do melons get married in church?

2. Why did Ancient Romans close down the colosseum?

3. Why is it great to be a test tube baby?

Continued from page 1 Holistic Methods

The following are some excellent options:

- Eat more veggies and fruits that are in season.
- Avoid coffee and sugary foods because they both increase blood acidity and enhance withdrawal symptoms.
- Practice deep breathing or meditation.
- Engaging in physical exercise can help you unwind and de-stress.
- Recognize the environmental cues that lead to cravings, such as drinking alcohol, quarrelling with your spouse, or going to a party.
- Make sure you drink enough water every day.
- Get a good night's sleep every night.

[1]Natural remedies to help you quit smoking. (2022). Verywell Mind. <https://www.verywellmind.com/natural-remedies-to-quit-smoking-89997>

L.O,L! Answers

All jokes are either original by author or found in A Prairie Home Companion Pretty Good Joke Book 6th Edition – Garrison Keillor Published 2015

1. Because they can't elope.
2. The lions were eating up the prophets.
3. You get a womb with a view.



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The CHOICES team will come to you! The **CHOICES** team of peer advocates will visit your group or program in New Jersey and provide mental health consumers with education about the consequences of smoking and tobacco products along with information regarding treatment resources available to make quitting easier. Email us dooleypc@rutgers.edu to set up date.



CHOICES is a partnership between Rutgers-RWJMS Division of Addiction Psychiatry, the Mental Health Association of New Jersey (MHANJ) and the NJ Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services and funded by the NJ Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services .