

7th ICO-WHO
SYMPOSIUM
ON TOBACCO CONTROL

WHO's Call to Action on Electronic Cigarettes

Key recommendations and factors underpinning the Call to Action

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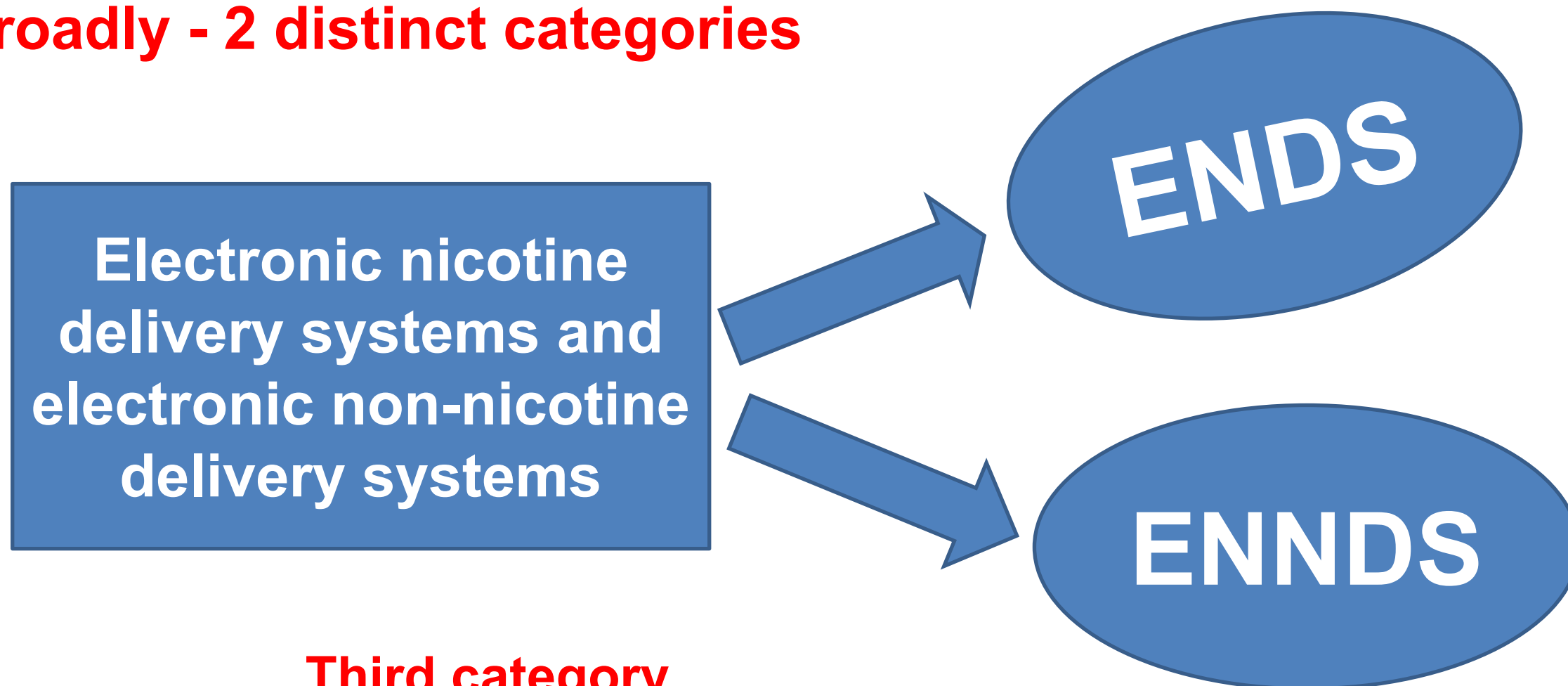
No Tobacco Unit (TFI)

Department of Health Promotion

World Health Organization

E-Cigarettes - What are they?

Broadly - 2 distinct categories



E-cigarettes - the most common
Heats a liquid containing nicotine + PG + VG + Flavours

Third category

ENDS contain nicotine and heat a liquid
***HTPs contain tobacco and are tobacco products**
***Nicotine Products (e.g., nicotine pouches)**

Fourth category

ENDS/ENNDS – e-Liquids

ENDS

1. Contains nicotine
2. Thousands of flavours
3. Diverse volumes
4. Range of colours
5. Can be manipulated
6. Disposable/refills for devices
7. Pods or cartridges
8. Contain other chemicals
9. Varying nicotine concentration



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ENNDS

1. Not supposed to contain nicotine
2. Thousands of flavours
3. Comes in diverse volumes
4. Range of colours
5. Can be manipulated
6. Disposable/refills for devices
7. Pods or cartridges
8. Contain other chemicals

E-Cigarette: Call to Action (Dec 2023)

Examples - ENDS



Cig-a-likes

These are disposables that have the look and feel of conventional cigarettes. This may renormalize smoking.



Vape-pens

These enable users to vary e-liquid formulations according to their preferences. Some use pre-filled cartridges while others allow users to refill them.



Disposables

These are the latest version of ENDS, often shaped like pods, but are meant to be discarded after the e-liquid has been used. They are available in a wide variety of flavours and are also easily concealable.



Tank systems

These enable users to vary almost every element of the user experience, including e-liquid formulations and battery power.



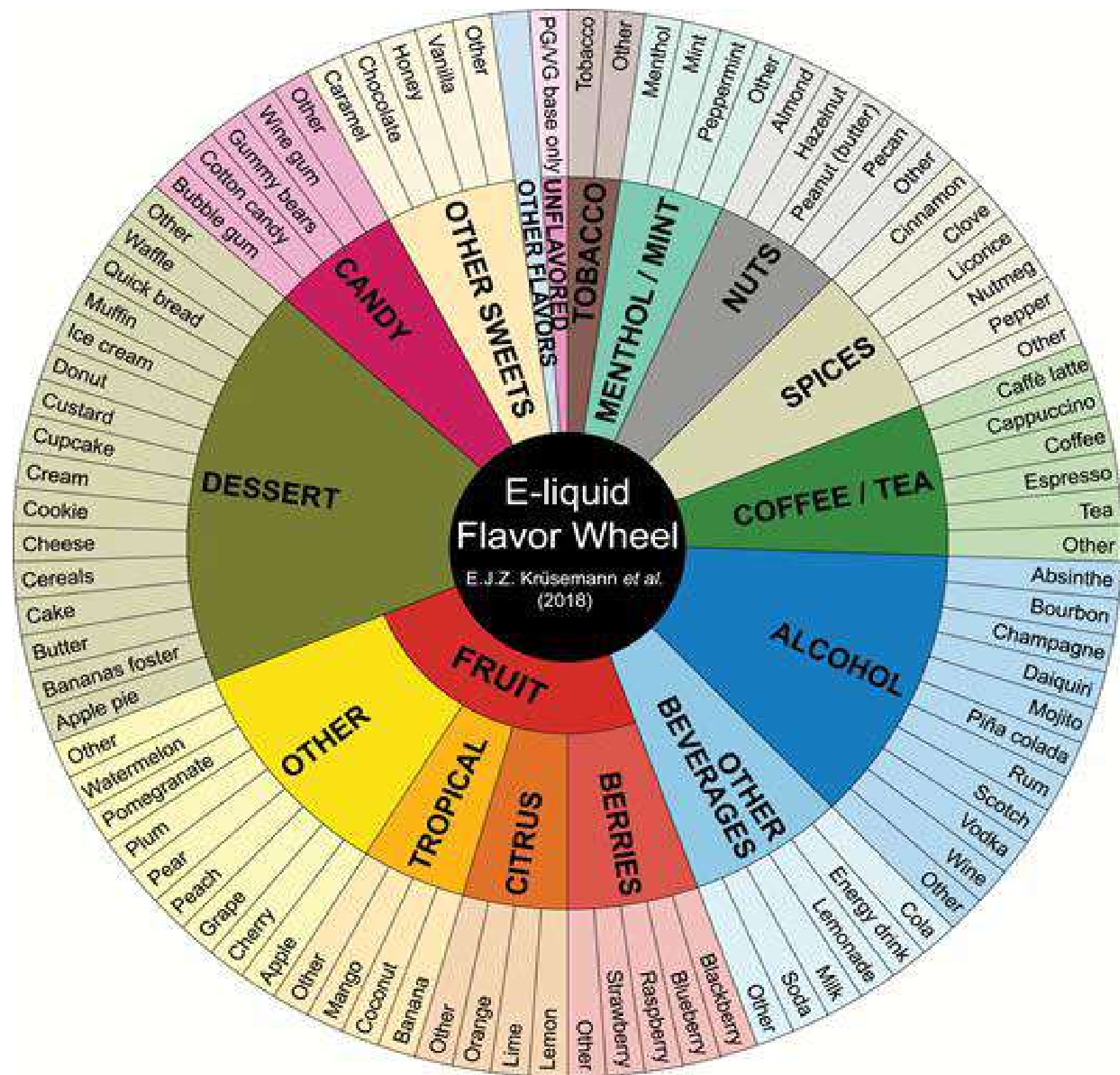
Pods

These are a newer generation of ENDS. Because this generation often uses nicotine salts, they provide higher doses of nicotine without a harsh sensation. The devices often look like USB sticks allowing users (e.g. young people or students) to conceal them.

E-cigarettes: Why are we talking about them?



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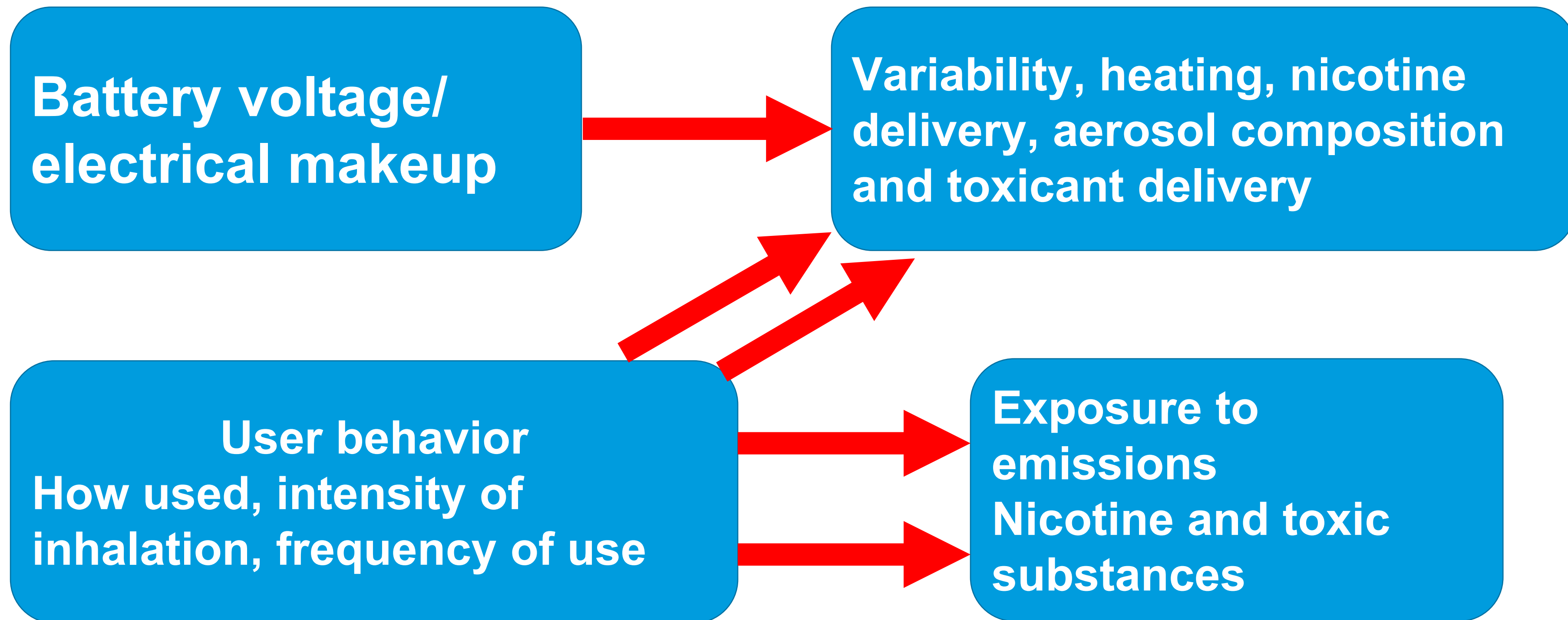
<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6751518/>

Lipstick, Watches and Merchandise

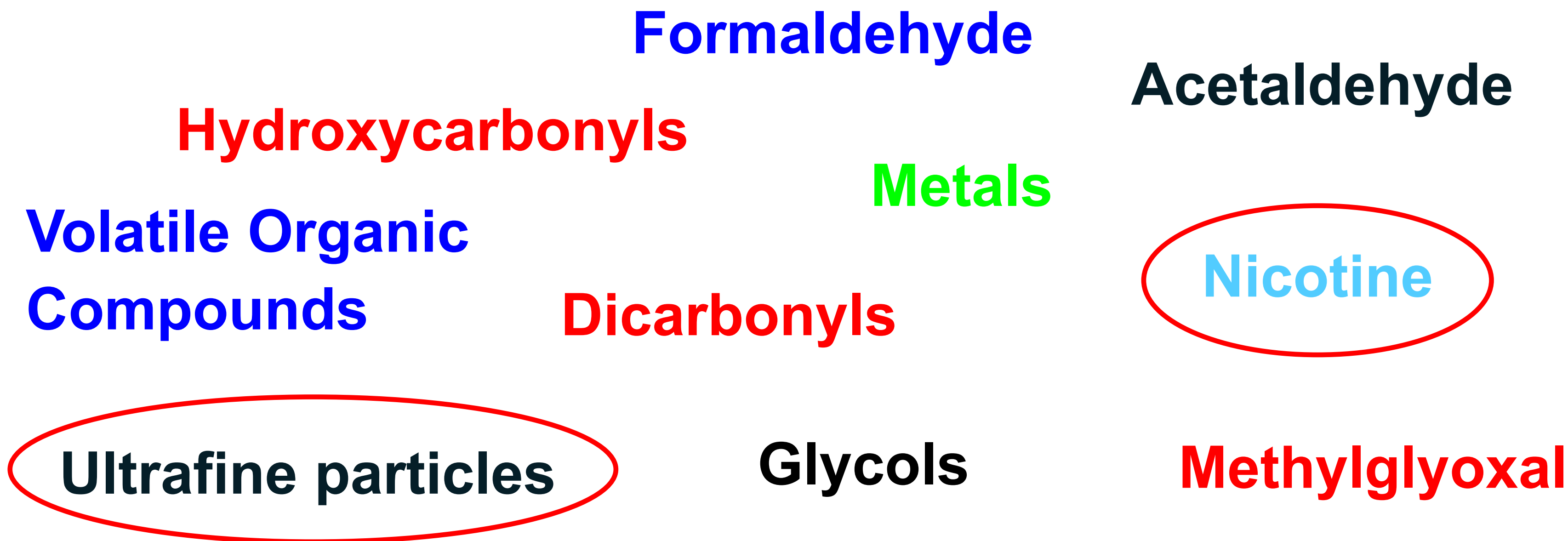


ENDS – Heterogeneity and exposure

Contents, makeup and emissions



Toxicants with known Health Effects



The US Surgeon General - e-cigarette aerosol can contain harmful constituents

E-Cigarettes: WHO Call to Action



E-Cigarette: Call to Action (Dec 2023)



<https://www.who.int/publications/m/item/electronic-cigarettes---call-to-action>

Problem Statement

E-cigarettes with nicotine are **highly addictive** and are harmful to health.

Globally, the market is **growing rapidly**, with a large diversity of products and attractive flavours, **aggressively marketed targeting children and young people.**

This has driven widespread use of these products among younger children and adolescents **with rates exceeding adult use** in many countries.

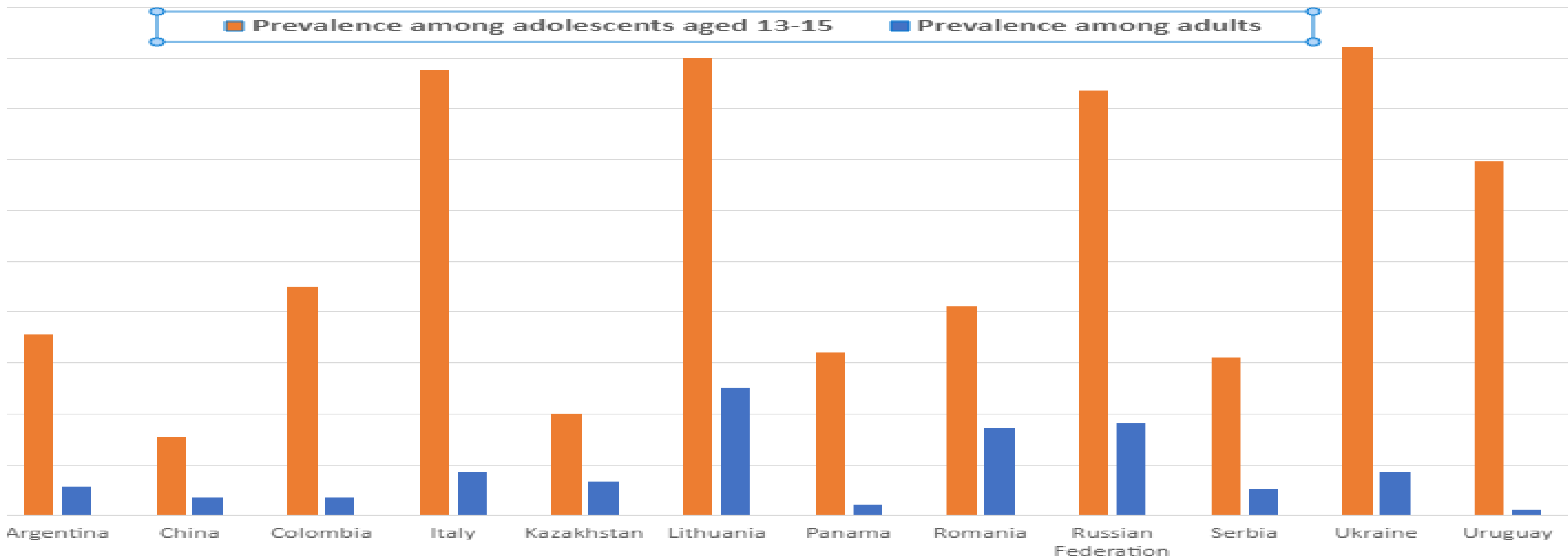


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E-cigarettes – Adolescents and Adults

Widespread use of these products among younger children and adolescents **with rates exceeding adult use** in many countries

Countries reporting e-cigarette use among adolescents aged 13–15 and adults in the period 2017–2022



WHO's Call to Action on Electronic Cigarettes: Key Recommendations

Where countries ban sale of e-cigarettes, they should ensure strong implementation, including:

- **monitoring and surveillance measures** that support a real-time view of uptake and patterns of use
- complementary measures such as **prohibiting advertising, promotion and sponsorship** (including digital marketing)
- effective enforcement measures

WHO's Call to Action on Electronic Cigarettes: Key Recommendations

Where countries permit commercialization of e-cigarettes as consumer products, **strong regulation** is necessary. This includes, at a minimum:

Regulating e-cigarettes to reduce their appeal and their harm to the population, including by:

- **Banning all flavouring agents**, including menthol and synthetic menthol analogues
- **Prohibiting attractive and/or promotional features** related to the presentation and packaging of the products
- **Regulating features that enable the user to manipulate the product**, post-sale

WHO's Call to Action on Electronic Cigarettes: Key Recommendations

Regulating e-cigarettes to reduce their appeal and their harm to the population, including by: *(Continued)*

- **Limiting the concentration and quantity of nicotine**, to reduce the risk of dependence
- **Setting a maximum volume for e-cigarette cartridges**, to limit toxicants exposure and use
- **Setting a maximum battery power**, to limit the influence of power on nicotine and toxicant delivery
- **Prohibiting device features** that permit transmission of information to and from third parties
- **Prohibiting additives** that have carcinogenic, mutagenic and reprotoxic properties

WHO's Call to Action on Electronic Cigarettes: Key Recommendations

Where countries permit commercialization of e-cigarettes as consumer products, strong regulation is necessary. *(Continued)*

Protecting the public from misleading or deceptive claims, such as false claims on safety or efficacy for quitting cigarette smoking.

Prohibiting sale of e-cigarettes to children, controlling the supply chain to **reduce the risk** of children **gaining access** and enforcing these restrictions against responsible entities.

Applying tobacco control measures to e-cigarettes, including the **supply** and **demand** reduction measures of the WHO FCTC.

WHO's Call to Action on Electronic Cigarettes: Key Recommendations

Where countries permit commercialization of e-cigarettes as consumer products, strong regulation is necessary. *(Continued)*

Strengthening monitoring and surveillance so that governments have a **real-time** view of the uptake of e-cigarettes and **patterns of use** (including **dual and poly use** with cigarettes and other tobacco products) to guide regulatory action.

Strengthening enforcement to ensure that the **measures** above are **effective**.

Sharing information regarding the **harmful effects** of e-cigarette use with the **public**.

WHO's Call to Action on Electronic Cigarettes: Key Recommendations

Where countries pursue a smoking cessation strategy utilizing e-cigarettes, they should:

- **control the conditions** under which the products are **accessed** to ensure appropriate **clinical conditions**
- **regulate** the products as **medicines** (including requiring marketing authorization as medicines).

The decision to pursue a smoking cessation objective, even in such a controlled form, should be made only after considering national circumstances, along with the risk of uptake and after exhausting other proven cessation strategies.

For a product to be appropriate for cessation, *it must demonstrate both efficacy and safety.*

WHO's Call to Action on Electronic Cigarettes: Key Recommendations

For all countries, a **comprehensive approach to tobacco control** is **critical** and should be implemented in line with national circumstances, including existing **tobacco control measures.**

Countries should implement a comprehensive approach to tobacco control, which includes

- raising tobacco excise taxes
- bans on tobacco advertising, promotion and sponsorship
- health warnings
- smoke-free areas
- mass-media campaigns

E-Cigarette: Call to Action (Dec 2023)

WHO's Call to Action on Electronic Cigarettes: Factors underpinning the Call to Action

Electronic cigarettes come in thousands of flavours, which are particularly attractive to children and young people. **Flavours play a key role in product use initiation**, serving as a path from experimentation to regular use, and can **increase the general toxicity of the aerosols**.

- There were approximately **16,000 unique flavours** identified for e-cigarettes in 2017, more than double those in 2014.

WHO's Call to Action on Electronic Cigarettes: Factors underpinning the Call to Action

Disposable electronic cigarettes, **particularly popular among youth**, have **increased in size**, contain much **more nicotine** than before and are **increasingly cheaper and accessible**.

- 'Disposable' (non-rechargeable and non-refillable) e-cigarettes sold in the **USA** have –
 - nearly **tripled in nicotine strength** (dubbed as the “nicotine strength arms race”)
 - **quintupled in e-liquid capacity**, and
 - **dropped in price** by nearly **70%** between 2017 and 2022.

WHO's Call to Action on Electronic Cigarettes:

Factors underpinning the Call to Action

Electronic cigarettes are harmful.

- All e-cigarettes **emit toxic chemicals**, often including nicotine. **Dual use, which is common, is at least as dangerous and likely more dangerous** than smoking conventional cigarettes or using e-cigarettes alone.
- Additional concerns arise regarding customizable electronic cigarettes that **allow the user to increase nicotine uptake**, as well as newer disposable and pod systems that have **higher nicotine delivery**.

WHO's Call to Action on Electronic Cigarettes:

Factors underpinning the Call to Action

There is a wide diversity of electronic cigarettes, many of which **allow the user to customise the products, including increasing nicotine uptake, and/or the level of toxicants.**

Device characteristics – battery power and customizable wattage. This can determine the amount of nicotine & toxicants to which the user is exposed.

- **Increasing the device power increases nicotine yields**, with one study finding that increasing the power output from 3 to 7.5 W **increased the nicotine yield by four or five times.**
- However, increasing the power from 4.1 to 8.8 W **approximately tripled volatile aldehyde emissions**; increasing the power from 6 to 13 W **increased emissions of the carcinogen benzene 100 times.**

WHO's Call to Action on Electronic Cigarettes: Factors underpinning the Call to Action

There is a wide diversity of electronic cigarettes, many of which allow the user to customise the products... *(Continued)*

Liquid constituents – choice of e-liquid.

- The nicotine content of e-liquids in pre-filled devices can **contain very high levels of nicotine** of > 60 mg/mL and “do-it-yourself” liquids can reach levels of nicotine of about 130 mg/mL.
- Fourth generation e-cigarettes (pods, pod mods and disposables) **contain high concentration nicotine** salt e-liquid, **creating greater dependence potential than other products.**

WHO's Call to Action on Electronic Cigarettes: Factors underpinning the Call to Action

There is a **wide diversity of electronic cigarettes**, many of which allow the user to **customise the products...** *(Continued)*

User behaviour – user's puffing style. Increasing puffing intensity can generate more nicotine in the smoke.

- By puffing more intensely, some **users of e-liquids with low nicotine strength can also achieve the same amount of nicotine per puff as high nicotine liquid users.**
- **More intensive puffing patterns** can also **expose users to higher amounts of toxicants**, including carbonyls, which have been linked with pulmonary disease in smokers.

WHO's Call to Action on Electronic Cigarettes: Factors underpinning the Call to Action

Labelling is not always accurate.

- These products are **not routinely tested by governments** and people are not aware of what they are inhaling.
- Studies have found that labelling is not consistently a reliable indicator of nicotine content and **mislabelling is a common issue.**

Commercial and other vested interests related to e-cigarettes harm public health.

- In a review of **105 studies** analysing the composition of liquids and emissions, **30% had authors that had received funding from ENDS/ENNDS interests** – including tobacco and related industries.

WHO's Call to Action on Electronic Cigarettes:

Factors underpinning the Call to Action

Electronic cigarettes as actually used in the population as consumer products have **not been proven to be effective for cessation at the population level** and may lead to **ongoing nicotine dependence**.

- E-cigarettes are associated with **significantly lower odds of being nicotine free** than nicotine replacement therapy and **ongoing dependence on nicotine**.

Insufficient country level action. Very few countries have measures in place to protect children from e-cigarettes.

- **88 countries**, covering a population of 2.3 billion people, have **no minimum age** at which these products can be bought and **74 countries**, with over 2 billion people, have **no regulations in place addressing e-cigarettes**.

WHO DG – WHO EB 154



“History [is] repeating itself, but with a different form. The **same nicotine**, but with a **different packaging**. And the sad part is the industry is saying it's harm reduction. And what has got **harm reduction to do with children?**”

To call it harm reduction and, **deliberately, recruit children and use schools as battleground, is dishonest**”.

WHO Director-General Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus

WHO Executive Board 154, January 2024



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<http://www.who.int/tobacco>

Thank You!