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# Royal College Of Physicians Says E-Cigarettes Can 'Prevent Almost All The Harm From Smoking'



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*I cover the war on drugs from a conscientious objector's perspective.* [FULL BIO](#)

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*Appropriate safety regulations could further reduce the hazards posed by e-cigarettes. (Photography: Timothy Fadek/Bloomberg News)*

In 1962, two years before U.S. Surgeon General Luther Terry released his [famous report](#) on the health hazards of smoking, the Royal College of Physicians (RCP) [covered the same subject](#) in a report that



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Today the RCP issued [another landmark report](#) that should inspire imitation in the United States, endorsing e-cigarettes as a harm-reducing alternative to the combustible, tobacco-containing kind.

“Large-scale substitution of e-cigarettes, or other non-tobacco nicotine products, for tobacco smoking has the potential to prevent almost all the harm from smoking in society,” the RCP says. “Promoting e-cigarettes...and other non-tobacco nicotine products as widely as possible, as a substitute for smoking, is therefore likely to generate significant health gains in the UK.”

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The same is true for the United States, where public health officials tend to view e-cigarettes with [fear](#) rather than hope. The RCP report carefully addresses the concerns raised by critics of vaping.

### Is vaping safer than smoking?

“E-cigarette vapour contains a far less extensive range of toxins, and those present are typically at much lower levels, than in tobacco smoke,” the report notes. “In normal conditions of use, toxin levels in inhaled e-cigarette vapour are probably well below prescribed threshold limit



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exposure to low levels of toxins over many years may yet emerge, but the magnitude of these risks relative to those of sustained tobacco smoking is likely to be small....Although it is not possible to quantify the long-term health risks associated with e-cigarettes precisely, the available data suggest that they are unlikely to exceed 5% of those associated with smoked tobacco products, and may well be substantially lower than this figure.”

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Similarly, a [2015 report](#) from Public Health England said “it has been previously estimated that [electronic cigarettes] are around 95% safer than smoking,” which “appears to remain a reasonable estimate.” Given this huge difference in risk, it is completely irresponsible for government officials and medical authorities to discourage smokers from switching to vaping by [implying](#) (or [stating outright](#)) that tobacco-free, noncombustible e-cigarettes are just as dangerous as the real thing.

The RCP argues that appropriate safety regulations could further reduce the





acceptable, more expensive, less consumer friendly or pharmacologically less effective, or inhibits innovation and development of new and improved products, then it causes harm by perpetuating smoking.”

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