# Vaping may be more harmful than smoking, study warns



A groundbreaking study led by Dr Maxime Boidin from Manchester Metropolitan University has raised significant concerns regarding the health implications of vaping, suggesting that it may pose greater risks than smoking traditional cigarettes. This research, which is part of a controlled long-term investigation, has revealed potential links between regular e-cigarette usage and serious health issues, including dementia, heart disease, and organ failure.

The study emerges against a backdrop of increasing vaping among the British population, with approximately one in ten adults reportedly engaged in the habit. Various surveys indicate that about 8 per cent of adult vapers have never been smokers, indicating a significant rise of non-smokers taking up vaping. While e-cigarettes have been commonly marketed as safer alternatives to smoking, this new research questions that assumption.

Dr Boidin stated, as reported in The Mirror, "What we have found is the dangers for someone who keeps vaping are no different from smokers." He explained that unlike smoking, which requires a deliberate act to light up each cigarette, vaping allows for continuous inhalation without the same constraints. He elaborated, "It's much easier to vape continuously because you can do it in places where smoking might be less acceptable."

The study assessed participants, averaging 27 years of age, who underwent regular stress tests to measure the elasticity of their blood vessels and blood flow to their brains. Participants were instructed to abstain from all forms of smoking and vaping for 12 hours before each test, consuming only water. The Flow-Mediated Dilation (FMD) test, which measures arterial response, yielded alarming results: both vapers and smokers exhibited flat readings indicative of damaged blood vessel walls, a potential precursor to significant cardiovascular problems. These findings suggest that both groups are at an increased risk of cognitive dysfunction, including dementia.

In an assertion highlighting the dangers posed by vaping, Dr Boidin noted, "When you put this mixture of metals and chemicals into your body you can't expect nothing to happen." He indicated that inflammation and oxidative stress caused by the chemical components in e-cigarettes contribute to the observed health risks.

The increasing prevalence of vaping in the UK, particularly among younger individuals, has alarmed health professionals. According to the Office for National Statistics, approximately 5.1 million people aged 16 or over are currently using e-cigarettes in the country. The trend has been associated with bright and appealing packaging targeted towards younger audiences, which some campaigners blame for drawing in new users.

Dr Boidin has called for tighter regulations around vaping, suggesting that these devices should be available only through prescription to mitigate potential health crises. He warned that without immediate action, the UK could experience a significant health emergency in the next decade as the long-term effects of vaping become more pronounced.

Currently, health authorities such as Public Health Wales advocate that while vaping is less harmful than smoking, it is not entirely risk-free. Reports of severe side effects related to vaping have begun to accumulate, with over 1,000 adverse effects noted to UK regulators, including serious conditions like lung disease.

In response to the study, Dr Marina Murphy, scientific spokesperson for the UK Vaping Industry Association, contested the research's findings. She expressed confidence in the safety of vaping, stating, "Millions of people have been using vaping products safely for many years. All the available data suggests that vapes are unlikely to exceed 5 per cent of the health risks associated with cigarettes."

The Welsh Government has announced plans to ban disposable vapes starting in June, emphasising the need to protect younger populations from potential harm.

The ongoing debate surrounding vaping's relative safety compared to traditional cigarettes continues to unfold, with this latest study providing critical insights that challenge existing assumptions in public health narratives.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## References

* <https://www.mmu.ac.uk/news-and-events/news/story/new-study-will-explore-long-term-health-impacts-vaping> - This URL supports the claim about a new study exploring the long-term health impacts of vaping, comparing vapers, smokers, and non-smokers to assess cardiovascular health risks.
* <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/healthandsocialcare/drugusealcoholandsmoking/articles/electroniccigaretteuseinengland/2022> - This URL provides data on the prevalence of e-cigarette use in England, supporting the claim about the increasing trend of vaping among the British population.
* <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/health-65449214> - This URL discusses concerns about vaping and its health implications, aligning with Dr. Boidin's warnings about potential health crises if regulations are not tightened.
* <https://www.gov.wales/ban-disposable-vapes> - This URL supports the claim about the Welsh Government's plans to ban disposable vapes to protect younger populations from potential harm.
* <https://www.nhs.uk/news/medication/vaping-linked-to-serious-lung-disease/> - This URL provides information on serious side effects related to vaping, including lung disease, supporting the assertion about accumulating reports of adverse effects.
* <https://www.publichealthwales.wales/news/2023/10/vaping-is-less-harmful-than-smoking-but-not-risk-free/> - This URL corroborates the stance of health authorities like Public Health Wales that while vaping is less harmful than smoking, it is not entirely risk-free.