Electronic cigarettes, or e-cigarettes, include e-pens, e-pipes, e-hookah and e-cigars. Collectively, they are referred to as ENDS – electronic nicotine delivery systems. E-cigarettes are most commonly battery-operated. They use a heating element that heats e-liquid from a refillable cartridge. The outcome is the release of a toxic chemical-filled aerosol, or vapor.

“While cigarette use has decreased among youth, e-cigarettes have tripled in use among middle and high school students from 2011 to 2013,” said Stanley H. Weiss, MD, Professor of Medicine at the Rutgers New Jersey Medical School. “Cartoon characters and candy flavors are two industry tactics used to lure children into the false comfort that e-cigs are harmless.”

Another dangerous aspect of e-cigs is that few people truly understand that they are exposing dangerous toxins to their bodies. However, the public’s lack of awareness is aided by the scarcity of evaluations done by the Food and Drug Administration.

The FDA has yet to determine the safety of the chemicals in e-cigarettes. Therefore, there are no requirements on what ingredients are disclosed on the labels of the nearly 500 brands of e-cigarettes. One of the most common myths is that e-cigarettes do not have nicotine, added Dr. Weiss. “It is easy to understand why people believe the myth,” he concluded. “With no FDA regulations, companies are not required to list nicotine levels accurately or at all.”
The Essex-Passaic Wellness Coalition (on the web at web.njms.rutgers.edu/EPWC) is made possible by a grant from the NJ Department of Health’s Office of Cancer Control and Prevention to Rutgers New Jersey Medical School, where Dr. Weiss is Professor of Medicine. The EPWC implements the New Jersey Comprehensive Cancer Control Plan (see www.njcancer.gov) in Essex and Passaic Counties. The EPWC also receives in-kind support from Rutgers Biomedical and Health Sciences and other organizations. You can contact the EPWC at 973-972-4623.

**MYTH: E-cigarettes don't have nicotine.**
**FACT:** Almost all e-cigarettes contain nicotine — including many that claim they are nicotine-free. A 2014 study proved that there is nicotine in e-cigarettes and that there is a discrepancy between the nicotine levels that are listed and the true composition of the e-cigarettes.

**MYTH: E-cigarettes can help smokers quit.**
**FACT:** No e-cigarette has been found by the FDA to be safe and effective in helping smokers quit. Smokers who use e-cigs have been found to continue smoking traditional cigarettes. What’s more, studies have found that e-cigs users who never smoked often progress to smoking traditional cigarettes.

**MYTH: There's no secondhand emissions from e-cigarettes.**
**FACT:** E-cigarettes expose others to secondhand emissions. “The aerosol (vapor) emitted by e-cigarettes and exhaled by users contains carcinogens, such as formaldehyde, according to early studies. Little is known about these emissions or the potential harm they can cause.”

**MYTH: E-cigarettes aren't marketed to kids.**
**FACT:** E-cigarette use among middle and high school students tripled from 2011 to 2013. Cartoon characters and candy flavors are two industry tactics used to lure children into the false comfort that e-cigarettes are harmless. Studies have also indicated that teenagers smoke e-cigarettes more so than they do traditional cigarettes.

**MYTH: E-cigarettes are safe.**
**FACT:** E-cigarettes are unregulated tobacco products. There are nearly 500 brands and 7,700 flavors of e-cigs despite the non-existent FDA regulations. But studies indicate that there are toxic chemicals in e-cigs. Among them? An ingredient used in your car’s antifreeze and formaldehyde, commonly used for embalming the dead!

If you are ready to quit smoking, call 1-800-QUIT-NOW or talk with a doctor about using one of the seven FDA-approved medications proven to be safe and effective in helping smokers quit.

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Ony three Clifton businesses—Jamie’s Cigar Bar, Kamil’s Restaurant and La Ziza lounge—were permitted to offer indoor smoking when the State-wide Smoke-free Air Act Initiative was approved in 2006. Since then, the Clifton Health Department has issued over $70,000 in fines to establishment owners and most of these offenses are related to indoor hookah smoking. Both patrons who are observed to be smoking and establishment owners can be fined up to $1,000 for smoking indoors.