

# Review of: "Effect of unguided e-cigarette provision on uptake, use, and smoking cessation among adults who smoke in the USA: a naturalistic, randomised, controlled clinical trial"

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## The tale of unintentional quitting with e-cigarettes among smokers expressing no desire to quit is unfolding - Brief Commentary

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The large, randomized, quasi-naturalistic study by Carpenter et al.<sup>[1]</sup> holds significant importance. Not only does it support the notion that e-cigarettes may contribute to cigarette reduction or cessation, as demonstrated in numerous other publications<sup>[2]</sup>, but it does so in a real-world context.

A key finding of this research is that smokers spontaneously ceased smoking even when they had no intention of quitting. This finding aligns with earlier work that revealed accidental cessation and complete substitution of cigarettes with e-cigarettes among smokers who initially expressed no desire to quit<sup>[3]</sup>. Importantly, these participants received no encouragement, motivation, or rewards for their smoking cessation efforts during the trial<sup>[3]</sup>.

It is crucial for readers to recognize the profound implications of these findings.

First, significant unintentional quitting was observed with a product that, by today's standards, is considered outdated. Also, despite the investigators' commendable efforts, the choices of flavors and nicotine levels were somewhat limited, which curtailed the potential for a satisfying "nicotine experience" and full cigarette substitution [4][5][6]. This limitation likely contributed to a lower overall quitting rate.

Secondly, it's important to consider that the study was conducted during a period marked by negative media attention related to EVALI and the disruptive impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. These external factors undoubtedly exerted an influence on the study outcomes, potentially resulting in an underestimation of accidental quitting due to increased relapse rates.

Lastly, it's worth emphasizing that, from a cost-effectiveness perspective, unintentional quitting represents an exceptionally favorable outcome.

## References

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