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Who uses e-cigarettes in Germany and why? Results from the Epidemiological Survey of Substance Abuse 2015

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Introduction:

Estimates of e-cigarette consumption in Germany vary considerably. The use of e-cigarettes for tobacco cessation is critically discussed. On the basis of current data, the distribution of the consumption of e-cigarettes and their use in the adult general population of Germany will be presented.

Methods:

The Epidemiological Survey of Substance Abuse 2015, a nationwide survey of 18- to 64-year-olds in Germany (n = 9.204, return rate: 52.2%), was used as data basis.

Results: E-cigarettes were known to most of the respondents (85.3 %, 43.5 Mio.), whereas only 2.9 % (1.5 Mio.) used e-cigarettes in the last 30 days. Younger people (OR = 0.95, 95%-KI = [0.93; 0.97]), men (OR = 1.45, 95%-KI = [1.02; 2.07]) and smokers (OR = 12.53, 95%-KI = [8.71; 18.03]) showed higher risks of consuming e-cigarettes. About a third of smokers and ex-smokers of conventional cigarettes (36.6 %) used e-cigarettes for tobacco cessation of which one fifth (21.3 %) was able to quit smoking.

Conclusion:

E-cigarette users seem to be more likely to be male, younger and smokers of conventional cigarettes. E-cigarettes can be successfully used for tobacco cessation, although coherent regulations during the production process are required.

Keywords: tobacco cessation, population survey, e-cigarettes, smoking, epidemiology