

Good afternoon and thank you for reading this.

I am a former cigarette smoker. I first picked up a cigarette when I was 13 years old and became addicted very quickly. I smoked cigarettes for 20 years. One day I woke up and felt very unhealthy so I started working on my health, one of these things was getting back into the gym. I noticed very quickly that I couldn't run for more than 10 seconds without struggling to breath! I thought, "this is horrible, Im 33 years old and should be in excellent shape! I eat right and focus on my health..... why am I struggling?"

I knew right away it was the cigarette smoking that caused me to feel awful, to have a continuous hacking cough and the inability to breathe when I exercised or simply walked up the stairs. I decided to try to quit again. In the past I had tried numerous times to quit using the patch, the gum and prescription medication. Nothing had worked! I had heard about vaping through a friend and decided to give it a try. I started with a small vape pen and a flavor similar to my favorite brand of cigarettes. Over the course of the next year I was able to control and slowly lower my nicotine dose to the point where I was only vaping for the habit and no longer addicted to nicotine. I also moved away from cigarette flavors into something more enjoyable. I am now 44 years old and have not touched a cigarette in 11 years because I know what they did to my body! I will never go back to that feeling!

Throughout this entire journey I also noticed I no longer coughed up mucus and phlem every morning and I could finally run! I participated in numerous races through the years including the Cherry Blossom 10 miler all while still vaping. I never would have been able to accomplish this if I had continued smoking cigarettes. This is very near and dear to my heart. I want to see others succeed in quitting, focus on their health journey and all of us become healthier as a nation.

Do not take vape products off the market. When I first started vaping I did not have the convenience of running to my local shop to grab what I needed. I had to order questionable products offline hoping they were safe. These products came from out of state. The convenience of having my local shops and knowledgeable staff that can answer my questions and help me meet my goals is unmatched!

Many including myself would not go back to smoking cigarettes. We would find the products we like, the products we as consumers want and order them by any means possible whether that is out of state or on the black market.

Thank you.  
Patricia Hayden