

TOBACCO HARM REDUCTION WITH VAPORISED NICOTINE: A PILOT STUDY OF NICOTINE PRODUCT PREFERENCES AMONG PEOPLE LIVING WITH HIV

OF QUEENSLAND

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1. Background

- Harm reduction such as long-term use of less harmful nicotine products could reduce the high rates of tobacco-related disease among People Living with HIV (PLHIV)
- . This study aimed to elicit acceptability of different nicotine products, including new vaporized nicotine products (e.g. e-cigarettes) for short-term or long-term use.

2. Methods

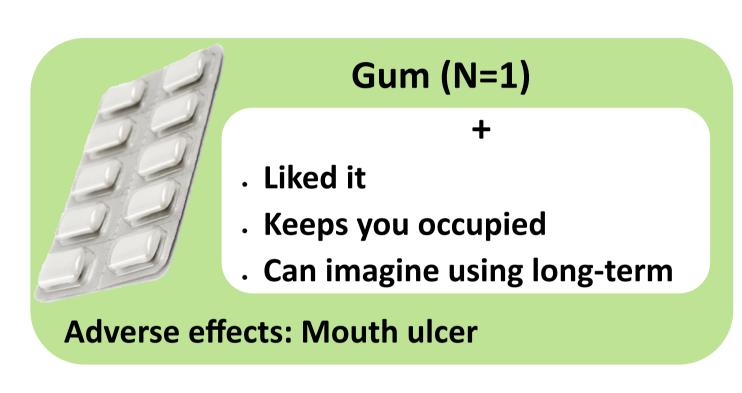
- We showed participants demonstrations of standard nicotine products (gum; patch; mouth spray; oral strip; inhalator) and vaporized products (two different tank style vaporisers).
- Participants completed a brief questionnaire, then selected up to two standard nicotine products and up to two vaporised nicotine products with their choice of e-liquid (18mg/mL nicotine or nicotine-free in 50:50 propylene glycol/vegetable glycerol mixture +/- menthol).
- One product was sent out per week with instructions and a demonstration video on how to use it.
- . Participants recorded their use in a product diary and received weekly phone calls from the research team.
- . After all products had been tried, participants attended a final face-to-face interview where product diaries and any unused products were collected.
- We discussed the participants' experiences of using the products using a semi-structured questionnaire. These qualitative data were recorded, transcribed verbatim and analysed thematically.

3. Participants – Baseline

- . Eleven participants attended the demonstration session and completed the baseline questionnaire
- . One participant was lost to follow-up after week 1
- Demographics N (%) Male 10 (90.9) Median 46 Age 28-51 Range

Time since last quit attempt	N (%)
In last 6 months	3 (27.3)
6-12 months ago	3 (27.3)
1-2 years ago	3 (27.3)
>2 years ago	2 (18.2)

Prior NRT use	N (%)
Gum	6 (54.5)
Mouth spray	2 (18.2)
Patch	9 (75.0)
Dissolvable strip	1 (9.1)
Inhalator	2 (18.2)
Other	3 (27.3)





Adverse effects: Sore arm if left on too long

4. Results

Inhalator (N=6)

- **Effective**
- Liked it
- Convenient Satisfied 'hand
- to mouth'
- **Good for**

travelling

- Disappointing Didn't give same 'fix' as cigarette Takes some getting

No taste satisfaction

Not effective

used to

Won't use again

Adverse effects: Sore throat/mouth, affected taste of food, cough, insomnia, nausea

Effective

Liked it

CoolFire IV (N=8)

- **Effective**
- Liked it
- Helped cut down Satisfied 'hand to mouth'
- Can imagine using longterm
- Felt marked improvement in lung function

Adverse effects: Cough

. Didn't like it . Disappointing Too big and heavy

- Felt like medical equipment **Unpleasant taste** (unflavoured e-liquid)
- . Not satisfactory Couldn't replace cigarettes Experience was like smoking ice

iTaste VV4.0 (N=8)

- **Effective**
- Satisfied 'hand to
- Liked it
- mouth'
- Can imagine using long-term
- One of the better products available
- Underwhelmed Too big and heavy
- Didn't fit in pocket
- Not stylish enough Reminded of hookah
- Still wanted a cigarette
- Frustrated that it wasn't satisfactory
- Couldn't replace cigarettes
- **Bad taste** Easy to use **Too strong** Helped cut down Didn't satisfy Can imagine using 'hand to mouth' long term Adverse effects: Sore throat/mouth, affected taste of food, hiccups, palpitations, nausea

Mouth spray (N=7)

Not effective

Didn't like it

Dissolvable oral strip (N=6) **Effective**

- **Quick effect** Liked it
- **Superior product** Discreet
- Will use again

Pack difficult to open

Vapour was harsh

- Disappointing **Takes some practice Quickly lost effective-**
- ness once dissolved . Still wanted a cigarette . Stuck to side of mouth

Participant reactions to vaporised nicotine products "This definitely satisfies the hand-

"When I used the iTaste it felt too much like you were smoking ice"

to-mouth aspect of smoking"

"My family's negative comments about my Cool Fire made me question whether or not this product is for me"

"The iTaste just reminds me too much of medical equipment" "Takes some getting used to but is very effective"

"I'm nervous to use my e-cigarette outside of the house"

5. Conclusions

- . There were mixed responses to all products tested. Some participants preferred standard products over vaporised products and vice versa.
- Participants reported more side effects with standard nicotine products than with vaporised products.
- . A number of factors influenced acceptability including nicotine delivery (satisfaction/effectiveness), taste, convenience, and social acceptability.
- . The results suggest there are a number of barriers to overcome to make tank style vaporisers acceptable for some PLHIV to use them, especially in public.

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