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E-CIGARETTES: GLOBAL OPINION, SCIENTIFIC FACTS AND USERS' VIEW
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Relevance. The age of modern technologies has brought a lot of interesting innovations. An idea of creating electronic cigarettes which are designed to replace usual cigarettes certainly deserves careful consideration. Scientists do not negate the fact that the device has its positive aspects, but do not exclude the possibility that an electronic cigarette can harm health. Owing to the fact that the most numerous users of e-cigarettes are young people, the issue may pose a concern about the health of the future population.

Aims: to explore fixed notions of the society about e-cigarettes; to discover up-to-date information about e-cigarettes in terms of medical knowledge; to interview a number of users and to find out their opinion about the use of e-cigarettes.

Materials and methods. The latest scientific publications concerning e-cigarettes have been analyzed. 107 people took part in the survey. Obtained data were statistically processed with Google forms.

Results. Five common opinions about electronic cigarettes were identified after the analysis of available Internet resources and the results of our survey. The first idea is that the steam generated by the electronic cigarette is absolutely safe and causes no harm. 12.4 % of the respondents are of the same opinion, 57.1% think that e-cigarettes are less harmful than usual cigarettes. 23.8% of the respondents consider using electronic cigarettes as harmful as using classical tobacco products.

The second opinion is that the components of the liquid, namely propylene glycol and glycerin, are harmful.

The third popular conviction is that e-cigarettes may help to give up the use of tobacco products. According to the survey, 23.1% of those who had smoked before were able to quit switching over to e-cigarettes.

There is a belief that electronic cigarettes do not cause addiction and are approved by the World Health Organization. But 71.4% of the respondents have been using e-cigarettes for about two years. This fact suggests that the formation of some degree of addiction has occurred.

Scientific opinion about the issue is contradictory. Many studies declaring the safety of e-cigarettes have been sponsored by the device manufacturers, so their reliability is disputable. But some independent studies have identified acrolein and formaldehyde which have toxic properties during the process of vaping e-cigarette fluid.

Conclusion. Today electronic cigarettes have not been completely studied yet, as they have been brought into use quite recently. Reliable data on their safety or noxiousness are still lacking. To the moment, there is no unanimity among both scientists and laymen whether e-cigarettes are safe or if it is a new form of the old problem.