

Market trends and distribution of electronic cigarette flavours

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Introduction and Aims: The popularity of electronic cigarettes (e-cigarettes) has rapidly increased since their development. E-cigarettes are available for purchase in a wide range of flavours designed to appeal to customers. This study aimed to investigate the flavour distribution of commercially available disposable e-cigarettes and pre-mixed e-liquids.

Design and Methods: The market trends for five online retailers (Liquid Nicotine Wholesalers, VaporFi, Super Vape Store, The Vaping Kiwi and VapourEyes) were investigated. Products were categorised into 13 flavour categories according to the e-liquid name and description provided by the supplier. The website analysis was performed from July to October 2021 and a total of 1,447 e-liquids and 119 disposable e-cigarettes were categorised.

Results: During investigation, there was a shift from the sale of nicotine-containing towards nicotine-free products. Fruit flavoured products were the most prevalent, accounting for 46.6% of the classified e-liquids and 69.7% of the disposable products. "Ice" and "freeze" were present in the flavour name of 43.7% of the disposables but only 9.9% of the e-liquids. The e-liquids had more options for lower nicotine concentrations than the disposables.

Discussions and Conclusions: Product availability changed during the analysis, likely as a result of the restriction of nicotine-containing e-liquids to individuals with a prescription, increasing the prevalence of unregulated nicotine-free e-cigarette products. The popularity of fruit flavours was attributed to their greater appeal and lower perceptions of harm. The prevalence of cooling components in the disposables may have been linked to higher nicotine concentrations to prevent potential throat irritation.

Disclosure of Interest Statement: *No funding to declare*