

Nicotine and Covid-19: a survey of more than 5,000 vapers

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Aiduce
Association Indépendante Des Utilisateurs de Cigarette Electronique

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Agir et dialoguer pour la réduction des risques

Communiqué du 11 Avril 2020

#Covid / Nicotine Enquête : 1ere analyse

The vapers have mobilized. In just 4 days, an online questionnaire made it possible to survey more than 4,000 households, representing nearly 10,000 people in France, including 5,000 vapers. Compared to the general population, the provisional results show no difference in the rate of suspected contamination among vapers.

French vaping survey / Covid-19

The survey launched by the associations AIDUCE and SOVAPE, with the collaboration of Pr Bertrand DAUTZENBERG of PARIS SANS TABAC, collected data on more than 10,000 people in four days. The provisional processing of the first data on 4,000 households has 9,824 people, 2.5% of whom report suspected contamination by Sars-Cov-2. Among the

4,315 exclusive vapers in the sample, 2.8% suspect they are infected. The differences between smokers, vapers, vapers and non-consumers of nicotine products do not seem significant.

Similar suspicion among vapers and the general population

The survey data concern 44% (4,315) of exclusive vapers, 8.3% (816) of exclusive smokers, 6.8% (663) of vapers who also smoke and 40.9% (4,011) of nicotine users . A proportion of non-nicotine users [1] are children, who are extremely unlikely to have symptoms. Compared to other national assessments, the share of vapers and their relatives suspected of being contaminated seems close to the first estimates in the general population.

Other estimates

According to the March 31 modeling carried out by Imperial College London, the rate of people who may have been infected with the virus in Europe is between 1.8 and 11.4%. The researchers advance with great uncertainty an estimate of 3% in France [2]. MG France, a union of general practitioners, has carried out a survey which assesses the number of patients diagnosed with Covid-19 symptoms at 2% in the office [3].

Finally, according to the declarations of the President of the Scientific Council, Pr Jean-François DELFRAISSY, the immunity rate in the first measurements in the East and the Oise is 10 to 15% (total of people who may have been infected, and therefore immune).

The enigma of the role of nicotine

At the origin of the survey, intriguing data from Chinese studies and statistics from the United States CDC [4] show a rate of smokers affected by Covid-19 from four to ten times lower than the smoking prevalence in the general population. These results raise questions about a possible role of nicotine, as mentioned on France Info by Professor Jean-François DELFRAISSY, president of the government's Scientific Council [5] .

The greatest caution is advised, because the Chinese and American data are preliminary and the elements of possible explanation sometimes contradictory. In this context, a survey was launched with vapers, a solid community capable of mobilizing on health issues. This extraction of data from the citizen survey is not strictly scientific. The provisional results are clues, to be read with caution and disseminated for the information of the public.

Appeal to authorities, researchers and doctors

Although it concerns nearly 10,000 people, this citizen survey is inconclusive on a major protective effect of nicotine. The first data show no major positive or negative effect of

vaping when faced with the risk of contracting Covid-19 for vapers and their entourage. It neither confirms the hypothesis of a protective effect of nicotine nor the alarmist messages propagated against vaping [6].

Let us remind vapers, the advice to respect the barrier gestures already broadcast: respect a social distance of 2 meters, wash your hands frequently, do not share your personal vaporizer, clean it frequently [7].

We call on the health authorities and the government's Scientific Council to do everything possible to refine the observation and provide data as quickly as possible. Doctors should question their patients on the subject to collect actionable data on nicotine consumption patterns and the smoking history of patients to improve knowledge, at least observational.

We call on competent researchers to take these factors into account when deciphering existing studies or in the context of new research.

Reminder: smoking promotes serious illnesses

Based on current knowledge, 98% of patients infected with Sars-Cov-2 recover from it [8]. For its part, smoking leads to illnesses. One in two smokers who continues to smoke dies prematurely, 75,000 preventable deaths each year in France [9].

Quitting smoking remains one of the best health prevention measures. The use of smokeless nicotine, by vaping or nicotine substitutes, significantly increases the chances of successfully quitting smoking.

We warmly thank the very many vapers who mobilized in a record time of four days to participate in the survey and contribute to the search for knowledge.

NOTES:

.Pdf version of this SOVAPE and AIDUCE press release
Press release from Paris Sans Tabac .pdf

- [1] La catégorie des consommateurs de substituts nicotiniques exclusifs a été mise de côté en raison du nombre trop faible de personnes (19) pour être représentative.
- [2] Voir https://www.liberation.fr/sciences/2020/04/03/selon-une-etude-anglaise-2-millions-de-francais-seraient-infectes-par-le-coronavirus_1783728
- [3] Voir <https://www.lesechos.fr/economie-france/social/un-million-et-demi-de-francais-pourraient-avoir-contracte-le-coronavirus-1192999>
- [4] Preliminary Estimates of the Prevalence of Selected Underlying Health Conditions Among Patients with Coronavirus Disease 2019 — United States, February 12–March

28, 2020 en ligne <https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/69/wr/mm6913e2.htm> –

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- [5] See <https://www.sudouest.fr/2020/04/10/covid-19-et-cigarettes-un-effet-nicotine-des-etudes-a-prendre-avec-beaucoup-de-precaution-7401913-10861.php>
- [6] See <https://www.sovape.fr/covid-19-vapotage-non-aux-fake-news/>
- [7] See <https://www.aiduce.org/le-vapotage-sars-cov-2-covid-19-informations-techniques-pour-les-vapoteurs/>
- [8] See <http://www.leparisien.fr/societe/quel-est-le-pourcentage-de-gueris-compare-au-nombr-d-hospitalises-20-03-2020-8284206.php>
- [9] See http://beh.santepubliquefrance.fr/beh/2019/15/2019_15_2.html

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