

**JPost.Com**

## **Ban On Electronic Cigarettes to be Voted on In 6 months**

By Judy Siegel-Itzkovich March 31, 2014

Although the Health Ministry's bill to bar tobacco advertising in the print media failed to pass in the Knesset a few months ago due to vigorous lobbying by cigarette companies, public health head Prof. Itamar Grotto hopes its initiative to prevent the sales of electronic cigarettes does not share the same fate.

After four months' preparation of a draft to prohibit the sale of both e-cigs and the chemicals that fill them, the document has been issued for the perusal of the public. Then, Grotto said on Monday, he hopes it will reach the Knesset and be passed in another half year. But as e-cigs are a growing business here, legislation to protect public health could easily have trouble overcoming the vested interests.

Most, but not all, e-cigs contain concentrated nicotine, an addictive drug and "medical poison," according to the document. This causes smokers quickly to become dependent on tobacco and goes straight from the lungs into the bloodstream and the brain. As increasingly stringent legislation has limited smoking in public places in Israel and abroad, causing tobacco companies to be worried about their income and addicted users to worry about when and where they can get their "fix," companies have increasingly developed and put on the market electronic cigarettes that give users the feeling of smoking without polluting their environment. These, said the ministry, can be "even more dangerous" than smoking nicotine.

Consisting of a battery, device that heats the chemical and a container to store it, it vaporizes the powder or liquid into synthetic smoke. Although Israeli law bars smoking in public places, it has not yet set down any rules regarding the use of e-cigs in public places or its advertising and marketing. A bill to include e-cigs in existing prohibitions has been tabled in the Knesset.

The ministry stated that e-cigs and related products "pose a severe health danger to the public." When the chemical is nicotine, it is a psychoactive stimulant, poison and addictive and releases adrenaline and dopamine. It is also used as an agricultural insecticide. As the nicotine in e-cigs is much more concentrated -- 24 mgs, during seven minutes of "smoking" compared to 1 mg. in tobacco -- it is more poisonous, the ministry document stated. Smoking e-cig chemicals also lasts longer than a cigarette.

These chemicals and others in e-cigs are not uniform or standardized among products. Leaks from cartridges have also been reported, posing a "serious toxic risk" from exposure in the air and by being swallowed, including by children, the ministry continued. In 2012, a baby died after swallowing the content of an e-cig cartridge. Propylene glycol contained in cartridges can result in poisoning, the

draft document, and cause respiratory problems in inflammation of the vocal cords. Inhaling another chemical, diethylene glycol, can cause damage to the kidneys and nervous system and has reportedly killed over 600 people in various countries. It can also cause harm when swallowed. Tobacco-specific nitrosamines are carcinogenic.

As a result of e-cig dangers, the US Food and Drug Administration has barred the sale of e-cigs, while the World Health Organization has advised countries to warn its residents of exposure to e-cigs, whose claims of reducing tobacco smoking “have not been proven.” Thus the ministry document calls for the prohibition of the manufacture, storage or marketing of e-cigs and their products.

<http://www.jpost.com/Health-and-Science/Ban-on-electronic-cigarettes-to-be-voted-on-in-6-months-347047>