


## Nicotine in any Form Is Harmful to the Heart

Regardless of whether nicotine is burned, heated, inhaled, or simply kept in the mouth as a pouch, the European Society of Cardiology classifies nicotine as a direct cardiovascular toxin in a consensus paper. This assessment was based on an evaluation of all available literature on nicotine consumption. It showed that no product containing nicotine is harmless to the cardiovascular system. This is because nicotine and associated toxins trigger oxidative stress and inflammation, leading to endothelial dysfunction, an important early sign of vascular damage. Persistent endothelial damage promotes the development of cardiovascular disease, which ultimately manifests in the form of high blood pressure, acute and chronic coronary syndromes, heart failure, stroke, and arrhythmia. The authors conclude that e-cigarettes, water pipes, nicotine pouches, and heated tobacco are not suitable for smoking cessation.

In view of a new wave of nicotine addiction, which is primarily affecting teenagers and young adults with flavored nicotine products, the consensus authors are calling for a coordinated European strategy that universally regulates all nicotine products. Otherwise, there is a risk of losing an entire generation to nicotine addiction. **vh** 

Source: Münzel T et al.: Nicotine and the cardiovascular system: unmasking a global public health threat. *Eur Heart J*. Published online 18 December 2025. doi:10.1093/eurheartj/ehaf1010