

# CoNECTR NEWSLETTER

*Colorado Nicotine E-Cigarettes and Tobacco Research Alliance*

Issue: September 2026

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## **Greetings from CoNECTR Director**

Welcome to our September 2026 Newsletter. In this edition, we highlight some content that has been in the news about new recommendations for e-cigarettes as cessation tools as well as new toxicity data on these devices.

We've been so pleased to see many of you at our new CoNECTR Quarterly Tobacco and Nicotine Interest Group meetings. If you have works in progress or other things to share with our community of researchers, clinicians, public health and community partners please reach out to get on the schedule.

If you can't make it to these new groups, we'd still like to help disseminate your work across the CoNECTR network. Do you have tobacco or nicotine research that you'd like us to feature? Email it to us at [gina.kruse@cuanschutz.edu](mailto:gina.kruse@cuanschutz.edu)

Gina Kruse, MD, MS, MPH  
Director of [CoNECTR](#)

***Stay up to date on our program***

[Visit Our Website](#)

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# ENGAGEMENT AND COLLABORATION

## CoNECTR Quarterly Tobacco and Nicotine Interest Group



Join us for **Quarterly Brown Bag Tobacco and Nicotine Interest Group**. Meetings will provide a welcoming, informal space to learn, connect, and collaborate across the tobacco and nicotine research and practice community. Bring your lunch, curiosity, and questions—and leave with new insights and potential collaborators. Meetings are scheduled for the last Thursday of April, July, October, and January, with occasional scheduling adjustments.



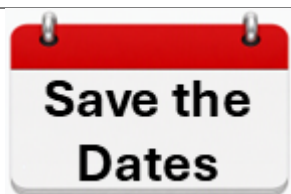
**Thursday, October 29, 2026, 12:00–1:00 PM**  
Via Zoom | [REGISTER NOW](#)

- CEPEG's TABS Survey, presented by Sara Cooper
- Genetic and Epigenetic Research on Nicotine Metabolism and Smoking Cessation Intervention with an American Indian Cohort, presented by Katrina Claw



**Thursday, January 28, 2027, 12:00–1:00 PM**  
**In Person Only:** Academic Office Building-1, Room 4101 | 12631 E 17th Ave, Aurora, CO 80045 ([map](#)) | [REGISTER NOW](#)

- E-Cigarettes: A Multi-Perspective Panel Discussion on Science, Policy, and Health



**Thursday, April 29, 2027** (Zoom)

**Thursday, July 29, 2027** (In-person)

Additional details will be shared via CoNECTR communications.



### Present Your Research at a CoNECTR Research-in-Progress Session

Research-in-Progress (RIP) sessions are offered through the CoNECTR Quarterly Tobacco and Nicotine Interest Group. Share your work, receive feedback, and connect with researchers, clinicians, public health professionals, and community partners. Projects at any stage are welcome.

Contact [gina.kruse@cuanschutz.edu](mailto:gina.kruse@cuanschutz.edu) to schedule a session.

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## Colorado Lung Cancer Screening Learning Collaborative



The Colorado Lung Cancer Screening Learning Collaborative, led by Dr. Jamie Studts and Andrea Dwer from CU Anschutz, is a new statewide initiative designed to increase the uptake and quality of lung cancer screening across Colorado. The collaborative will connect experts and peers across Colorado and the nation through eight twice-per-month virtual sessions launching in November. The series will focus on practical evidence-based strategies and tools to strengthen equitable, high-quality lung cancer screening, including integration of tobacco treatment within screening programs, among various approaches. Interested individuals are encouraged to review the attached flyer and complete and interest form.

[Learn More](#)

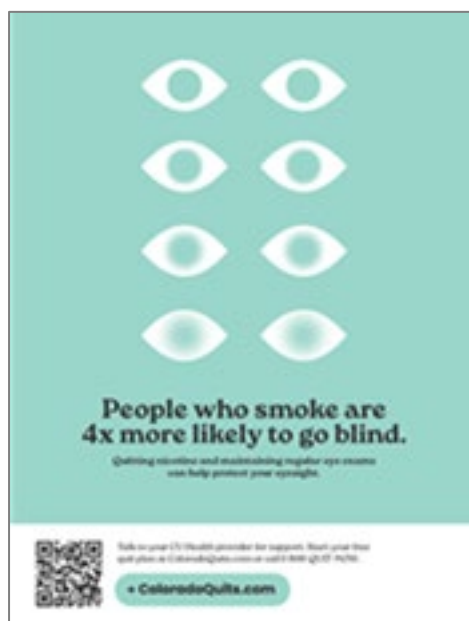
## CoNECTR IN ACTION

### Bringing Tobacco Cessation Messaging to Ophthalmology Clinics

Collaboration is at the heart of CoNECTR's mission, and a recent partnership demonstrates the impact that can result when researchers, clinicians, and public health professionals come together. When Stephanie Martich, DO was featured in the CU Anschutz article, [How Smoking vs. Vaping Affects the Eyes](#), it sparked a new collaboration through CoNECTR. CoNECTR connected Dr. Martich with partners at the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE) to explore opportunities for tobacco cessation outreach and education.

Together, they developed patient-facing educational posters for ophthalmology clinics that highlight the impact of nicotine and tobacco use on vision and eye health while promoting Colorado QuitLine resources. This collaboration demonstrates how CoNECTR helps turn shared interests into meaningful public health impact.

Thank you to Stephanie Martich, the CDPHE team, and all collaborators who contributed to this effort.



# EVENTS AND CONFERENCES

## Guest Speaker Dr. Nancy Rigotti – Two lectures available



**Nancy Rigotti, MD**, is Professor of Medicine at Harvard Medical School, Associate Chief of the Division of General Internal Medicine at Massachusetts General Hospital, and founder/director of the MGH Tobacco Research and Treatment Center. A past president of both the Society for Research on Nicotine and Tobacco and the Society of General Internal Medicine, Dr. Rigotti has led landmark clinical trials evaluating cytisinicline for smoking and vaping cessation.

*GIM Grand Rounds | Meiklejohn Annual Lecture*

### **Cytisinicline: A New Treatment for Nicotine Dependence?**

October 6, 2026 | 8:00 AM - 9:00 AM

**In-person:** Academic Office Building-1, Room 7000 | 12631 E 17th Ave, Aurora, CO 80045 ([map](#))

**Zoom:** <https://cuanschultz.zoom.us/j/95808346167>

*No registration needed*

#### **Objectives**

1. Know how a natural product became a potential new smoking cessation medication for the US.
2. Understand the clinical trial evidence supporting cytisinicline for tobacco cessation.
3. Identify key research questions whose answers are needed to guide cytisinicline's future use.

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*CPC / CoNECTR Joint Seminar*

### **E-cigarettes & other new nicotine products: Do they belong in clinicians' tobacco treatment toolkit?**

October 6, 2026 | 12:00 PM - 1:00 PM

**In-person:** Fitzsimons Building, Room E5332 | 13001 E 17th Pl, Aurora, CO 80045 ([map](#)). Lunch will be provided for in-person RSVP's

**Zoom:** a zoom link will be emailed to RSVP's participants the morning of the talk.

**[REGISTER HERE](#)**

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***Review past lectures and newsletters***  
***[Visit CoNECTR Website](#)***

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## Upcoming Conferences

[Public Health in the Rockies](#) (September 22 – 24, 2026, Keystone, CO)  
[American Public Health Association Annual Meeting](#) (November 1 - 4, 2026, San Antonio, TX)  
[World Conference on Lung Health \(International Union Against Tuberculosis and Lung Disease\)](#) (November 17-20, 2026, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil)  
[Annual Conference on the Science of Dissemination and Implementation in Health](#) (December 13-16, 2026, Oxon Hill, MD)  
[Society for Research on Nicotine and Tobacco](#) (March 3 - 6, 2027, San Francisco, CA)  
[American Society of Addiction Medicine](#) (April 7 - 11, 2027, Minneapolis, MN)  
[American Society of Preventive Oncology](#) (April 11 - 13, 2027, Atlanta, GA)  
[Society of Behavioral Medicine](#) (April 14 – 17, 2027, Atlanta, GA)  
[Society for General Internal Medicine](#) (May 5 - 8, 2027, Seattle, WA)  
[American Thoracic Society](#) (May 14 - 19, 2027, New Orleans, LA)  
[Society for Prevention Research](#) (June 1 - 4, 2027, Washington, DC)  
[Thomas L. Petty Aspen Lung Conference](#) (June 8 –11, 2027, Aspen, CO)  
[National Conference on Tobacco or Health](#) (June 29 – July 01, 2027, San Diego, CA)  
[Behavior Genetics Association](#) (June 29 – July 2, 2027, Minneapolis, MN)  
[The European Conference on Tobacco or Health \(ECToH\)](#) (2029, Brussels, Belgium; *Date TBA*)  
[The Nicotine Summit](#) (*Next dates TBA*)

## PUBLICATIONS FROM LOCAL INVESTIGATORS

To share the great work around campus we have created a search to identify the new tobacco and nicotine research published by University of Colorado researchers. Please send us additional papers to highlight, it will help us to refine our search.

Hoang TT, Cosin-Tomas M, Lee Y, Monasso G, Xu Z, Li SS, Zeng X, Starling AP, Reimann B, Röder S, Zillich L, Jima DD, Thio CHL, Pesce G, Kersten ETG, Breeze CE, Burkholder AB, Lee M, Ward JM; BIOS Consortium; Alfano R, Deuschle M, Duijts L, Ghassabian A, Herrera LG, Jaddoe VW, Motsinger-Reif AA, Lie RT, Nawrot TS, Page CM, Send TS, Sharp G, Stein DJ, Streit F, Sunyer J, Wilcox AJ, Zar HJ, Koppelman GH, Annesi-Maesano I, Corpeleijn E, Snieder H, Hoyo C, Hüls A, Sirignano L, Witt SH, Herberth G, Plusquin M, **Dabelea D**, Yeung E, Wiemels JL, Richmond RC, Taylor JA, Felix JF, Håberg SE, Bustamante M, London SJ. "Prenatal Smoking Exposures and Epigenome-Wide Methylation in Newborn Blood." *Environ Health Perspect.* 2026 Apr 16;134(3):289-302. doi: 10.1021/EHP.6c00142. PMID: 42428256; PMCID: PMC13347645. <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/42428256/>

Gardner WM, Balte PP, Eckhardt CM, Morris JE, Bhatt SP, Couper DJ, Freedman ND, Jacobs DR, Kalhan R, Loehr LR, London SJ, Lutsey PL, Schwartz JE, White W, Yende S, **Sanchez TR**, Oelsner EC. "Pipe and cigar use, lung function decline and clinical outcomes: an analysis of the NHLBI Pooled Cohorts Study." *Thorax.* 2026 Jun 15;81(7):686-693. doi: 10.1136/thorax-2025-224461. PMID: 41775624; PMCID: PMC13436620. <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/41775624/>

**Cockroft JD, Ritger C, Bloedow B, Dorsey B, Glasgow RE.** "Exploring multi-level determinants of implementation of nicotine replacement therapy guidelines for youth vaping: a mixed-methods case study." *Implement Sci Commun.* 2026 Jul 9. doi: 10.1186/s43058-026-01037-3. Epub ahead of print. PMID: 42426922. <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/42426922/>

Kephart L, Chadwick G, Stover M, **Kruse GR**, Jeffers AM, Cheng D, Levy DE. "A Qualitative Comparative Analysis of State Flavored E-Cigarette Policy Implementation and E-Cigarette Use." *Am J Prev Med*. 2026 Jul 26;71(5):108523. doi: 10.1016/j.amepre.2026.108523. Epub ahead of print. PMID: 42503361; PMCID: PMC13561031. <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/42503361/>

SantaBarbara NJ, Louis JS, Comulada WS, Cantrell J, Finlayson HA, Wurcel AG, **Erlandson KM**. "A qualitative study to explore perceptions of exercise as a smoking cessation tool among people with HIV who smoke cigarettes." *Tob Prev Cessat*. 2026 Jul 10;12. doi: 10.18332/tpc/221807. PMID: 42445614; PMCID: PMC13358468. <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/42445614/>

Keke C, Lebina L, Motlhaoleng K, Niaura R, Abrams D, Variava E, Abraham P, Gupte N, Golub JE, Martinson N, **Elf JL**. "Repeat Behavioral Counseling, With and Without Combination Nicotine Replacement Therapy, for Smoking Cessation Among People With HIV in South Africa." *AIDS Behav*. 2026 Aug;30(8):2422-2430. doi: 10.1007/s10461-026-05064-y. Epub 2026 Jan 31. PMID: 41689618; PMCID: PMC13019438. <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/41689618/>

## Other Publications Worth Noticing

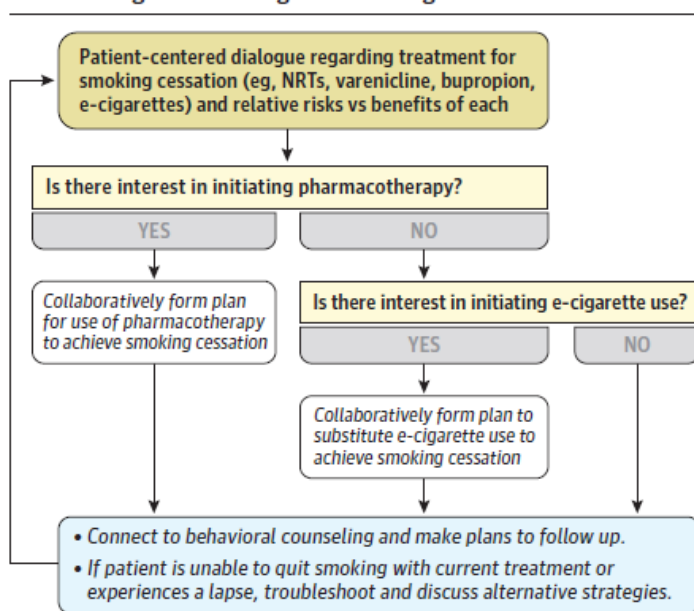
### Nicotine E-Cigarettes for Cigarette Smoking Cessation: Recommendations to US-Based Clinicians

Leavens ELS, Pebley K, Smith TT, Ahluwalia JS, Bello MS, et al.

01-Sep-2026 | *JAMA* | doi:[10.1001/jama.2026.13087](https://doi.org/10.1001/jama.2026.13087)

A position manuscript by a working group from the Treatment Research Network of the Society for Research on Nicotine and Tobacco recommends integrating e-cigarettes into conversations on the risks and benefits of all evidence-based pharmacologic treatments for smoking cessation. The authors provide specific guidance on how to discuss potential misperceptions and suggests questions to guide patient conversations, and evidence-based best practices for using e-cigarettes to quit smoking, which can be shared with patients.

**Figure. Flow Diagram Showing Clinical Decision Support for Integrating Nicotine E-Cigarettes Into Cigarette Smoking Cessation Treatment**



*Pharmacotherapy* refers to medications that are US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approved for smoking cessation (eg, nicotine replacement therapies [NRTs], varenicline). *E-cigarette* refers to devices and e-liquids that are FDA authorized for the protection of public health.

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## Electronic Cigarettes for Smoking Cessation

Lindson N, Livingstone-Banks J, Butler AR, McRobbie H, Bullen CR, et al.

26 August 2026 | *Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews 2026* | DOI#: [10.1002/14651858.CD010216.pub11](https://doi.org/10.1002/14651858.CD010216.pub11)

A Cochrane Library systematic review of 80 randomized controlled trials found that nicotine-containing e-cigarettes were more effective than nicotine replacement therapy, non-nicotine e-cigarettes, and behavioral support alone for achieving smoking cessation. No increase in serious adverse events was identified; however, the authors note that evidence on long-term health effects and newer-generation devices remains limited, highlighting the need for continued research.

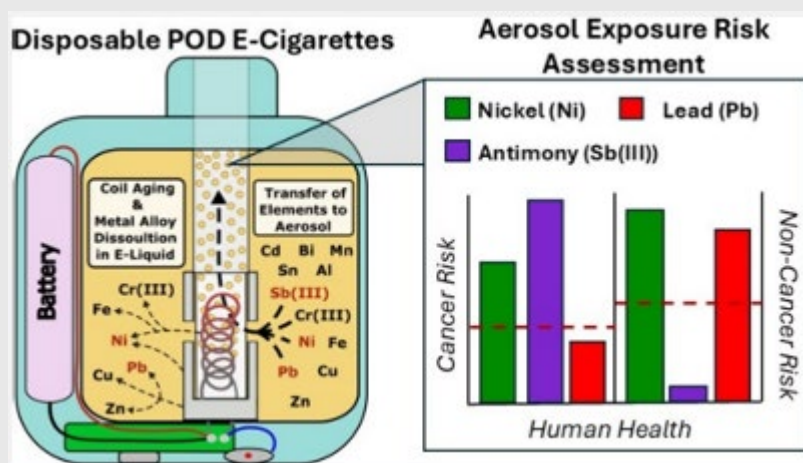
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## Elevated Toxic Element Emissions from Popular Disposable E-Cigarettes: Sources, Life Cycle, and Health Risks

Mark R. Salazar, Lalima Saini, Tran B. Nguyen, Kent E. Pinkerton, Amy K. Madl, Austin M. Cole, Brett A. Poulin.

27 August 2025 | *ACS Central Science* | DOI# [10.1021/acscentsci.5c00641](https://doi.org/10.1021/acscentsci.5c00641)

The authors report excessive emissions of toxic metallic elements in aerosols from flavored and “clear” versions of three popular products, orders of magnitude higher in concentration than traditional cigarettes and other e-cigarettes. Risk assessments revealed cancer risks from Ni and Sb-(III) and noncancer toxicity risks from Pb and Ni exceeded safety thresholds.



# TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

## UPCOMING TRAININGS

The [Behavioral Health and Wellness Program](#) from the CU Anschutz Department of Psychiatry offers evidence-based trainings for administrators, a broad spectrum of healthcare providers, and peer specialists on a variety of wellness topics. Below are some of the trainings that might be of interest for folks working in tobacco and nicotine.



### [NicFree Futures Program](#)

An evidence-based nicotine cessation program designed to teach healthcare, behavioral health, public health, education, and peer support professionals the skills to support youth and young adults, who use nicotine— especially vaping and other emerging products.

- December 9-10, 2026
- 



### [Motivational Interviewing for Behavior Change – Level I \(Introductory\)](#)

A two-day intensive training, to learn the fundamentals of Motivational Interviewing.

- Spring 2027 Virtual Training: February 3-4, 2027
- 



### [DIMENSIONS: Tobacco Free Advance Techniques](#)

An evidence-based tobacco treatment program designed to teach providers and peers the necessary information and skills to promote successful tobacco cessation within their organizations.

- Spring 2027 Virtual Training: March 10-11, 2027
- 



### [Rocky Mountain Tobacco Treatment Specialist \(RMTTS\) Training Program](#)

A program developed to train interdisciplinary healthcare providers and community and public health professionals to act as champions for tobacco and nicotine treatment in their organizations and communities.

- Spring 2027 Virtual Training Dates: May 10-13, 2027
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# FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

## Use Pivot-RP to Find Funding Opportunities Relevant to You

Pivot-RP is a comprehensive funding database available to all CU Anschutz faculty and staff.

- Register for a new account at <https://pivot.proquest.com/register>
- Already have an account? Sign in at <https://pivot.proquest.com/session/login>



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## Other ways to learn about funding opportunities

- [Funding Focus Newsletter | CU Anschutz](#)
- [Research Grant Process | American Cancer Society](#)
- [Tobacco Regulatory Science Program | NIH](#)
- [Smoking and Tobacco Use | CDC](#)
- [Tobacco education, prevention, and cessation grant program | CDPHE](#)

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We want to hear your feedback. Let us know where you present your tobacco/nicotine research, suggest content for future newsletter or activities using the link below.

[Provide feedback here](#)

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