

It's truly amazing how human beings retain information. What's more surprising perhaps, is that the information can be skewed, misinterpreted, or wrong—without us even realizing it.

# FACT FROM FICTION

Through a combination of cultural and historical tales, folklore, and conventional wisdom, certain things we take as a given sometimes turn out to be incorrect. This is no one's fault—it's just one of the quirks of life. But it's also important to challenge and, if needed, correct these myths and misconceptions so that people have access to accurate information that helps them make better decisions.

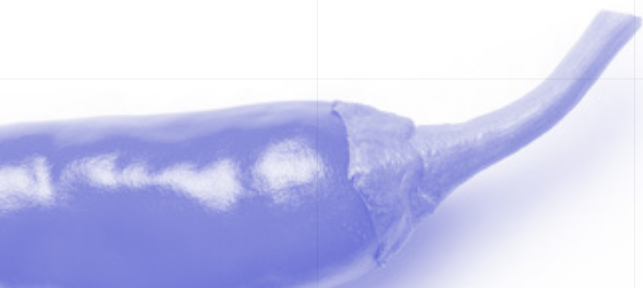
## MISCONCEPTIONS ARE ALL AROUND US

There are misconceptions attached to many parts of our life—about things that surround us daily.

**Take chilies**, for instance. It's widely assumed that the spiciest part is the seeds, which is why we often remove them when we're preparing them for cooking. However, seeds are not the spiciest part of chili peppers at all. In fact, the seeds contain a low amount of capsaicin, one of several compounds that induce the hot sensation. Actually, most of the spice lives in the white spongy part on the inside of the pepper.

There are also misconceptions about the world around us. When you look up to the sky, you might see **clouds** that are made of water droplets or tiny ice crystals, but when seeing a "cloud" rising from a chimney, we often automatically presume it's smoke. Cooling towers in power stations and other facilities aren't in fact emitting smoke, but rather water vapor. Water vapor is water in its gaseous form, while smoke is a result of combustion and is more complex in its composition—for example, it includes solid particles and toxic substances.

Some misconceptions are relatively harmless and have little impact on our lives, but there are also misconceptions that we should take more seriously.





## MISCONCEPTIONS ABOUT TOBACCO

Everyone knows that smoking causes serious disease and is addictive. The best choice is to quit tobacco and nicotine altogether. No misconceptions there!

However, there are misconceptions about tobacco, and some of them might hinder adults who don't quit cigarettes and nicotine altogether from making informed choices about alternatives.

For example, there are often misconceptions about the role of nicotine in causing smoking-related disease, and this can act as a barrier that prevents adults who would otherwise continue smoking from considering the use of smoke-free alternatives instead. Nicotine is one of the reasons why adults smoke, along with other factors, such as taste and ritual. It is addictive and not risk-free, but it is the high levels of harmful and potentially harmful chemicals in the smoke of a burning cigarette that are the primary cause of smoking related disease, not nicotine.

Adult smokers are sometimes not aware of the fundamental difference between cigarettes and smoke-free products. A burning cigarette releases more than 6,000 chemicals, around 100 of which have been classified by public health authorities as harmful or potentially harmful. The aerosol of smoke-free products is fundamentally different from cigarette smoke because the tobacco is not burned. By eliminating the burning process and production of smoke, the levels of harmful chemicals generated can be significantly reduced compared with cigarettes.

**While nicotine is not the primary cause of smoking-related disease, it is addictive and not risk-free. Certain people should not use products that contain nicotine. This includes pregnant or breastfeeding women and people with heart disease, severe high blood pressure, or diabetes. Minors should not use or have access to tobacco or nicotine-containing products.**

The best option for adult smokers is to quit tobacco and nicotine products entirely, but the reality is that many don't. For those people, there are a range of smoke-free alternatives available that are a better choice than continued smoking. The different product types use different methods to provide nicotine without smoke, allowing adult smokers to choose an option that suits them.

## MISCONCEPTIONS THRIVE IF THEY ARE NOT CHALLENGED

Myths and misconceptions are everywhere, and it can be difficult to spot them. But we all have the right to access accurate information to make informed decisions.

Everyone deserves to know the facts, especially when it comes to tobacco.

**Quitting tobacco and nicotine altogether is the best choice for health. Existing tobacco control measures designed to discourage initiation and encourage cessation should continue. However, despite these efforts, millions of people continue to smoke. Science-backed smoke-free products can play a role in moving adults who would otherwise continue to smoke away from cigarettes.**