

# Review of: "[Commentary] On Heated Tobacco Products and the Importance of Science-Based Assessments and Product Classification"

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Potential competing interests: No potential competing interests to declare.

I will only speak to the argument related to the comparative analysis of HTP vs. cigarette yields. The primary point in question is whether the per heat stick yields should be scaled prior to comparison to per cigarette yields. The authors state that the usage of heat sticks is “comparable” to their usage of cigarettes and the per heat stick nicotine biomarkers are “comparable” to those of cigarettes. That is intended to show that no adjustment is necessary, but the language is rather vague, since it is not at all clear what “comparable” means. The authors should provide a table showing the observed average number of heat sticks and cigarettes consumed per participant in the referenced studies and the associated confidence intervals. A similar table should be provided for per heat stick and per cigarette nicotine equivalents. The outer limits of those confidence intervals can then be used to provide a conservative multiplier to use in lieu of the 3.2-3.6 factor that the authors assert is inappropriate.

I think the reduction in HPHCs is large enough that even with a conservative estimate of the appropriate factor to use, heat not burn products will likely still show lower HPHCs.

I think this is a worthwhile topic, and if the authors approach the topic in a transparent quantitative manner, it should be published (and I will change my rating).