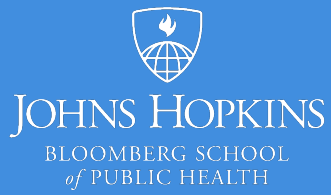




Tobacco-Free Nicotine: Knowledge, Awareness, Use, and Perceptions of Relative Addictiveness and Harm Among People Who Use E-cigarettes



Institute for
Global Tobacco Control

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No tobacco interests to disclose.



Background

Context

Tobacco-free nicotine (TFN): Nicotine synthesized from non-tobacco sources like chemicals in a lab. AKA synthetic nicotine

Tobacco-derived nicotine (TDN): Nicotine obtained from the tobacco plant

Manufacturers must submit a PMTA and receive authorization from FDA before marketing products

Little is known about consumer knowledge, awareness, use, and perceptions of addiction and harm for TFN liquids



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Objective:

To describe knowledge, awareness, use, and perceptions of tobacco free nicotine (TFN)/synthetic nicotine liquids, among a sample of adults who use e-cigarettes





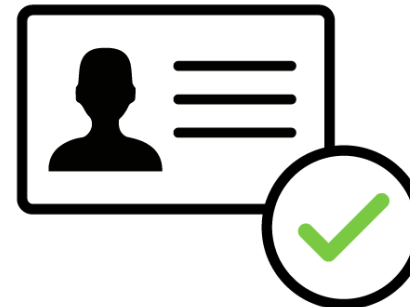
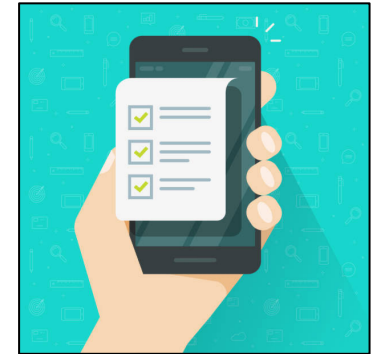
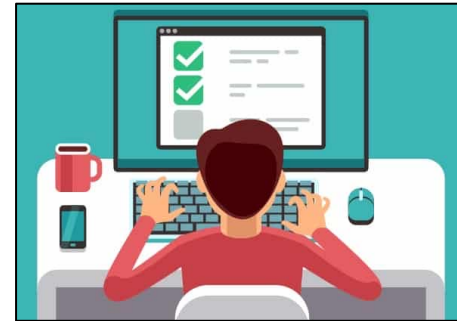
Approach

Study design

Cross-sectional web-based survey

Participant identities were verified

Participants submitted a valid photo of their most used e-cigarette device










Sample

US adults (21+) who used an e-cigarette in the past 30 days (N=1163), with most (92%) being daily users

The questionnaire was completed from February to April 2023

92%

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday
			
Thursday	Friday	Saturday	
			



Recruitment

Invited Vaping and Patterns of E-cigarette use Research (VAPER) Study participants immediately following their wave 5 questionnaire

VAPER Study

Preliminarily valid completion of the wave 5 survey (n=1580)

20 minutes
\$15-30 gift card

100%

Invited to complete the TFN survey (n=1580)

TFN Survey

84%

Preliminarily valid completion of the TFN survey (n=1323)

5-7 minutes
\$10 gift card

88%

Valid completions of the TFN survey & used ecigs in the past 30 days (n=1163)

Analytical sample



Questionnaire and analyses

First, we assessed knowledge of the presence of nicotine and tobacco and the source of nicotine in TFN products

A TFN definition was provided: *“For the questions that follow, “tobacco-free nicotine” refers to e-liquids that contain synthetic/artificial nicotine that does not come from tobacco plants”*

Then, respondents self-reported awareness, ever use, past 30-day use, and perceptions of relative addictiveness and harm (TFN versus TDN)

Descriptive analyses were conducted

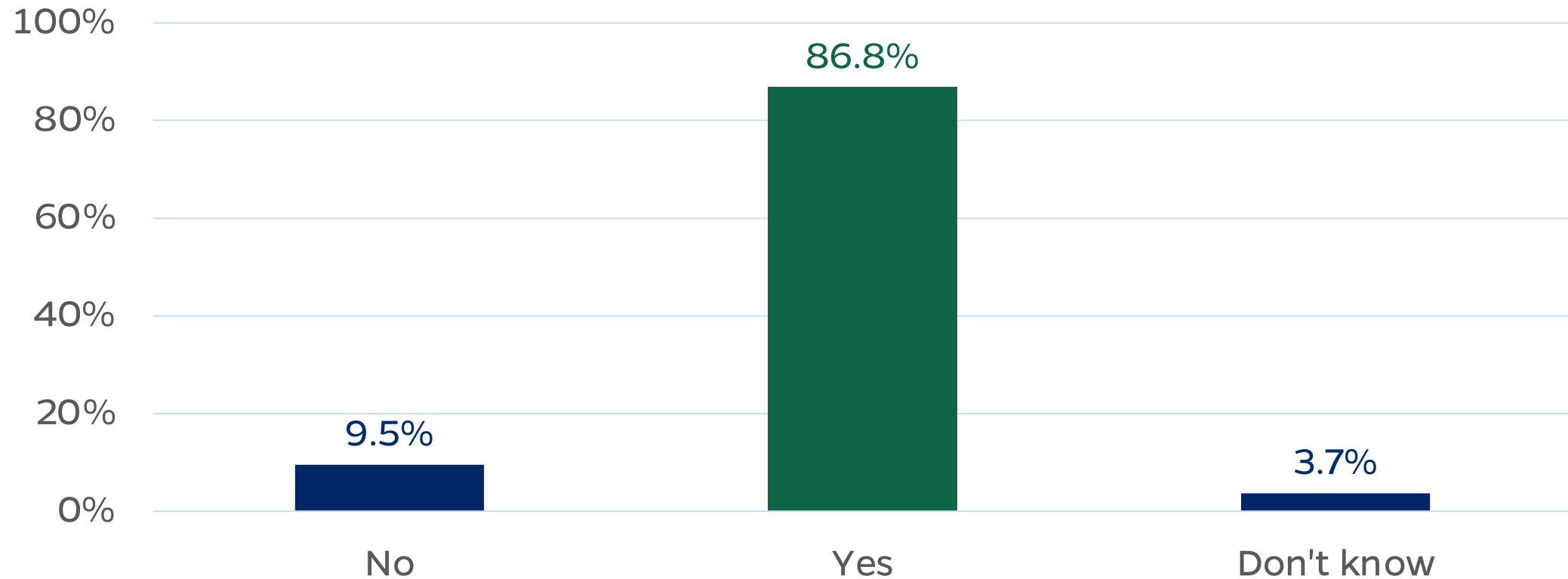




Results

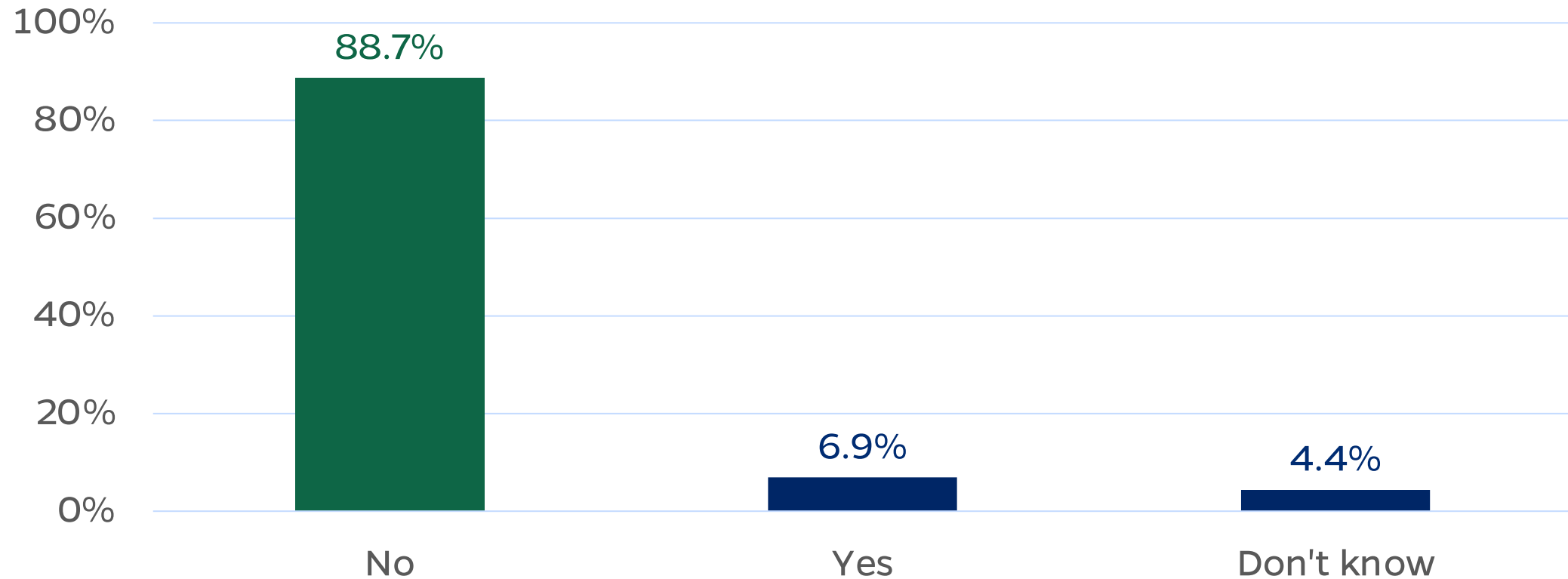
Knowledge

If a product is labeled as containing "tobacco-free nicotine,"
does it contain NICOTINE? (n=1163)



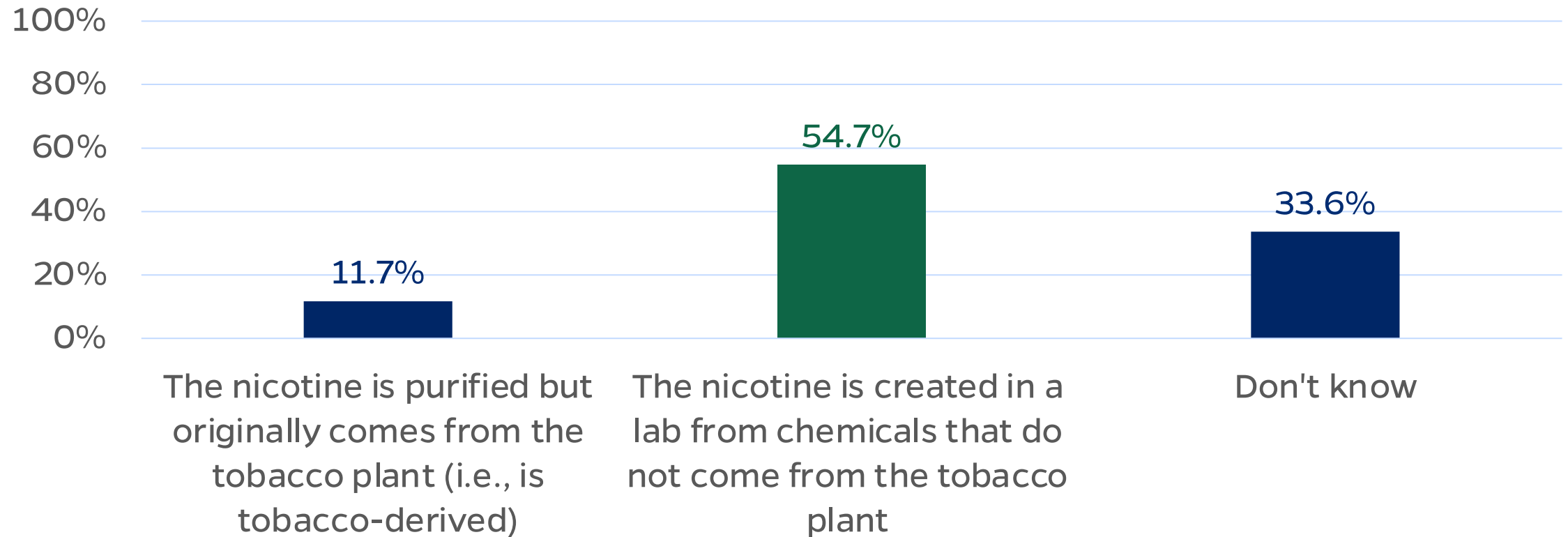
Knowledge

If a product is labeled as containing "tobacco-free nicotine,"
does it contain TOBACCO? (n=1163)



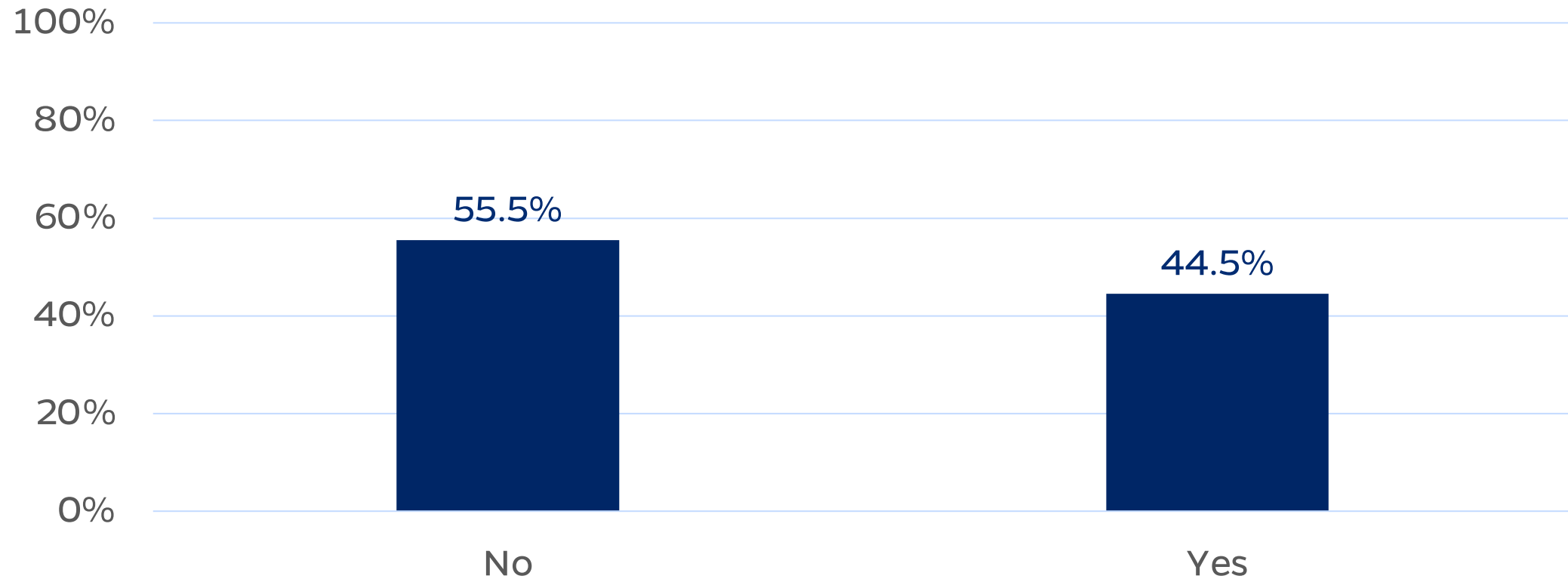
Knowledge

"Tobacco-free nicotine" products DO contain nicotine. Which of the following is true of the nicotine in "tobacco-free nicotine" products? (n=1163)



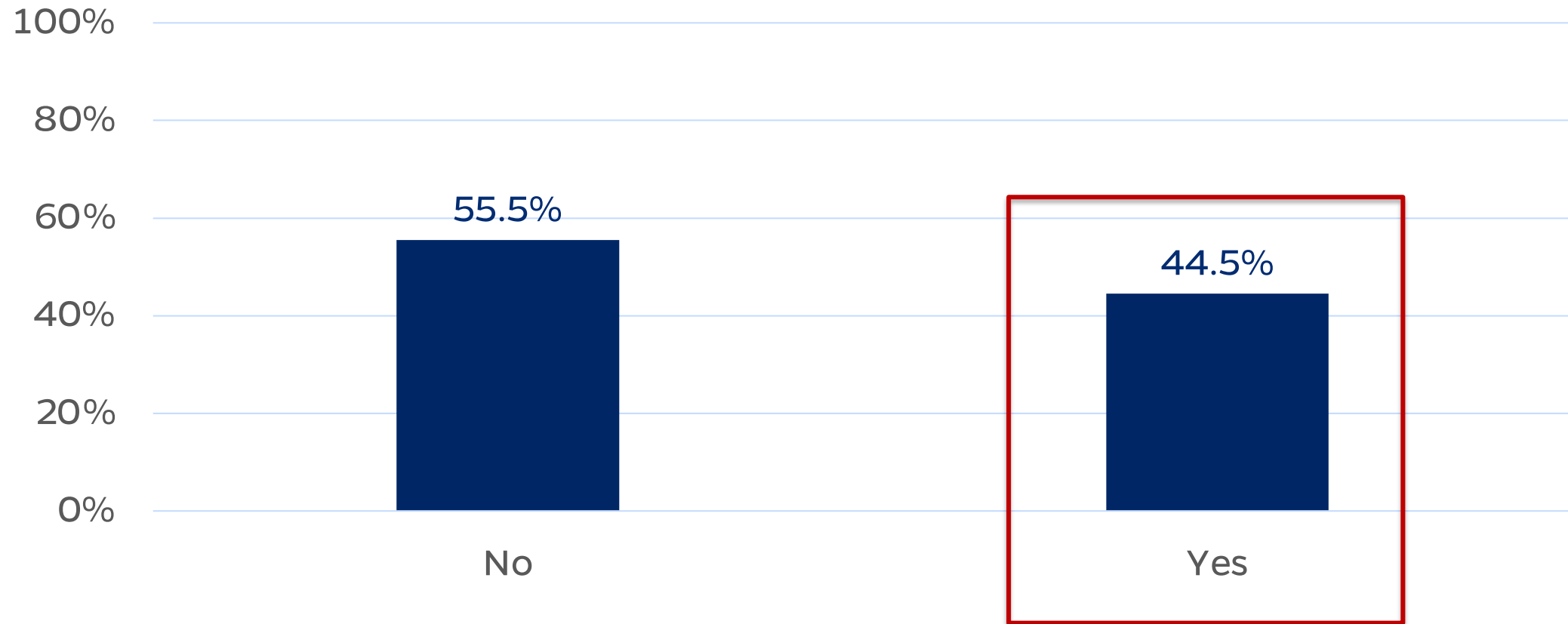
Awareness

Before today, had you ever heard of TOBACCO-FREE nicotine e-liquids?
(n=1163)



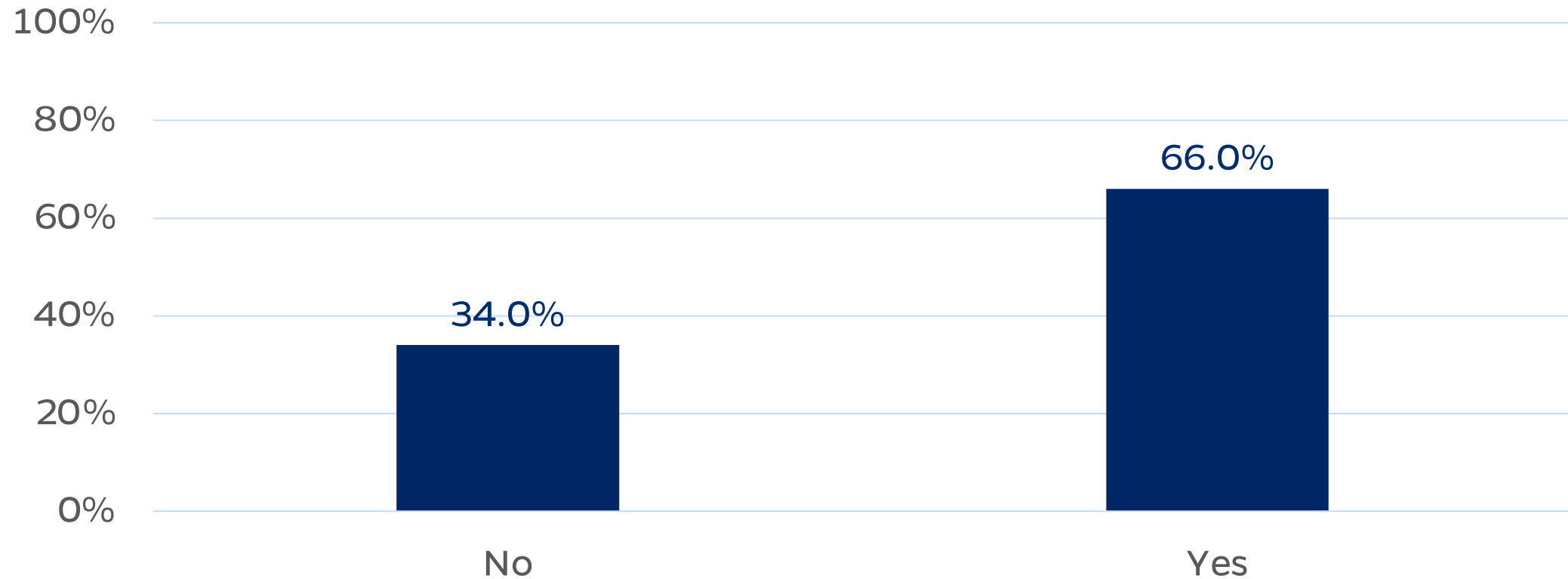
Awareness

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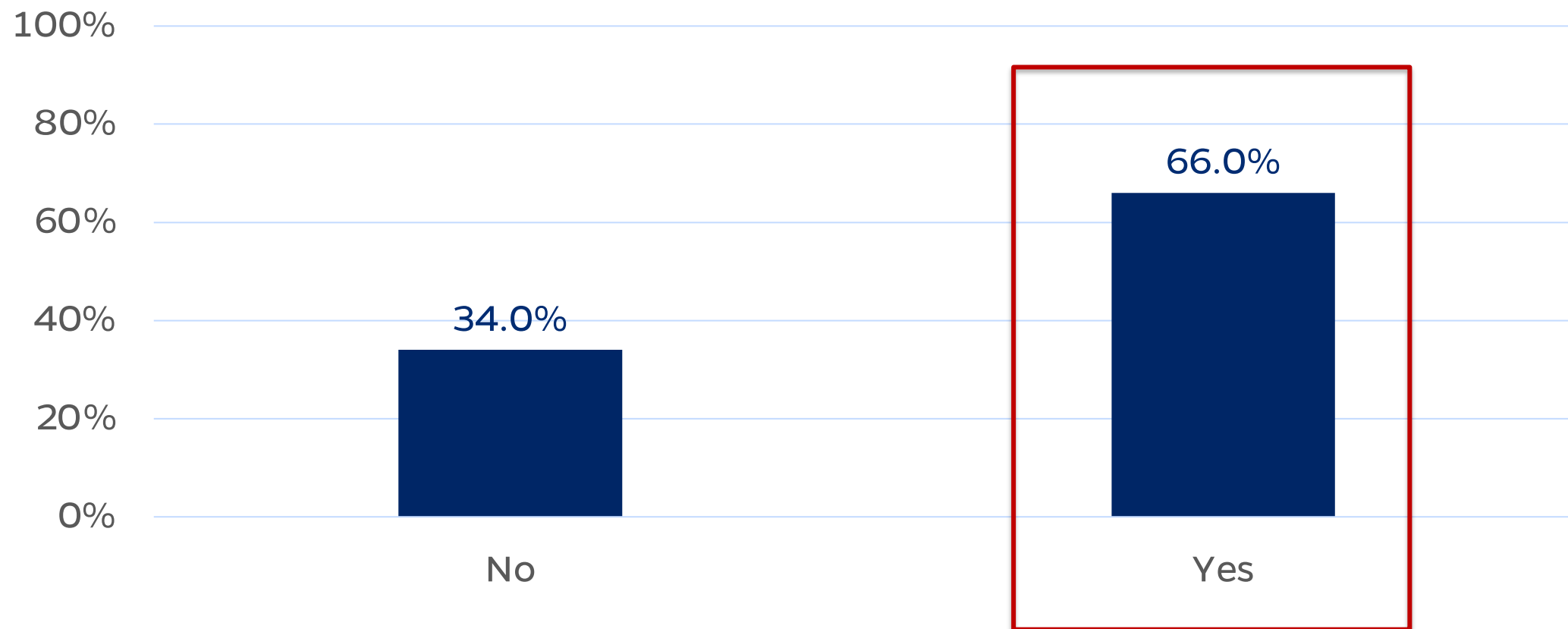
Using TFNs, knowingly

Have you ever knowingly used TOBACCO-FREE nicotine, even one or two puffs? (n=517)



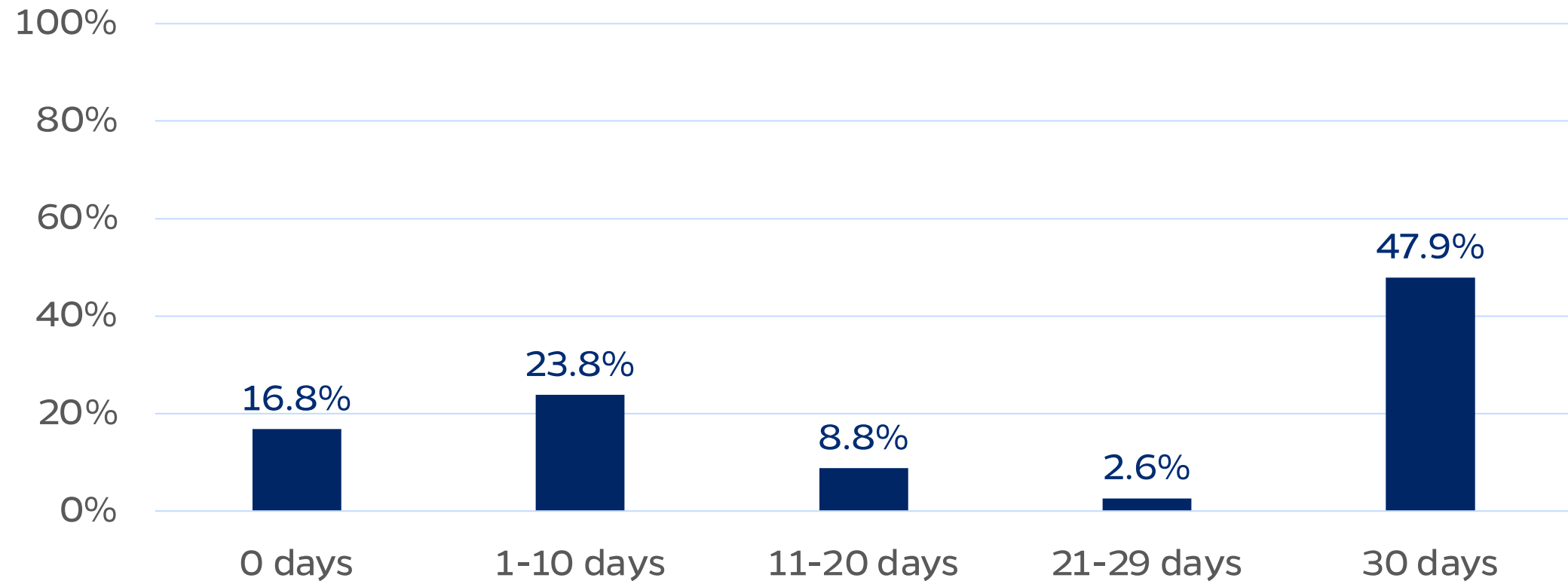
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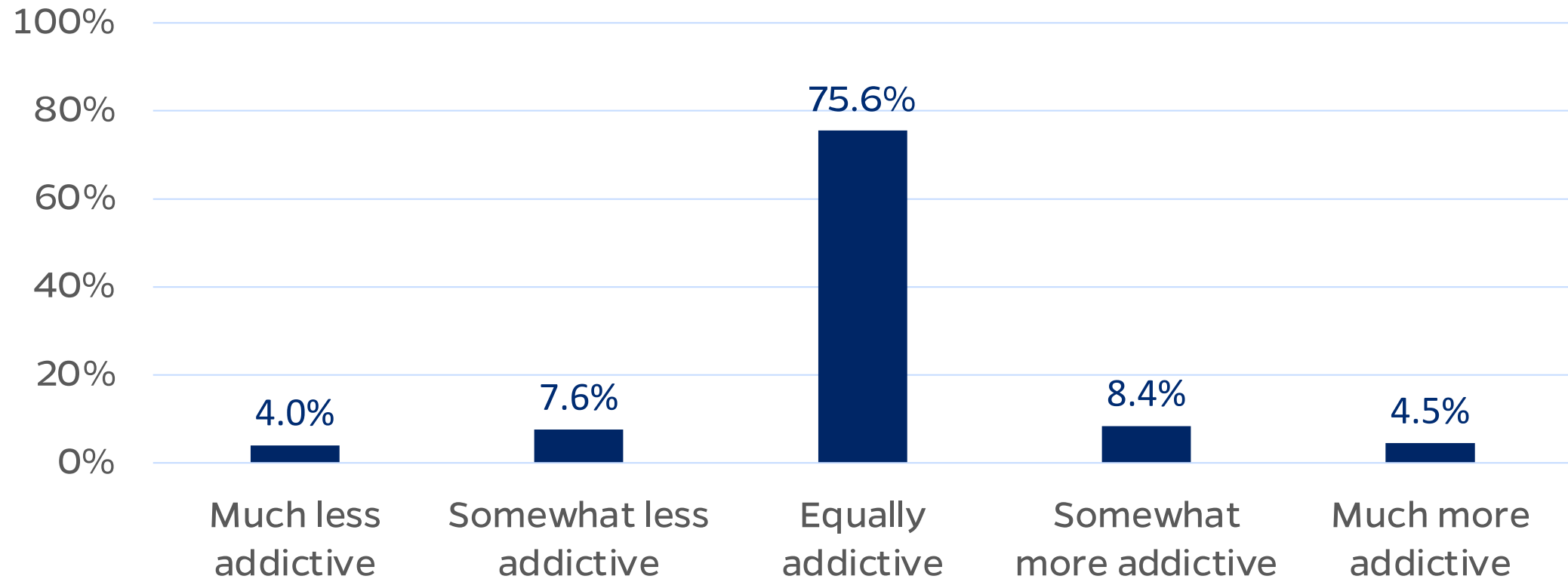
Using TFNs, knowingly

Approximately how many days out of the PAST 30 DAYS did you knowingly use tobacco-free nicotine? (n=340)



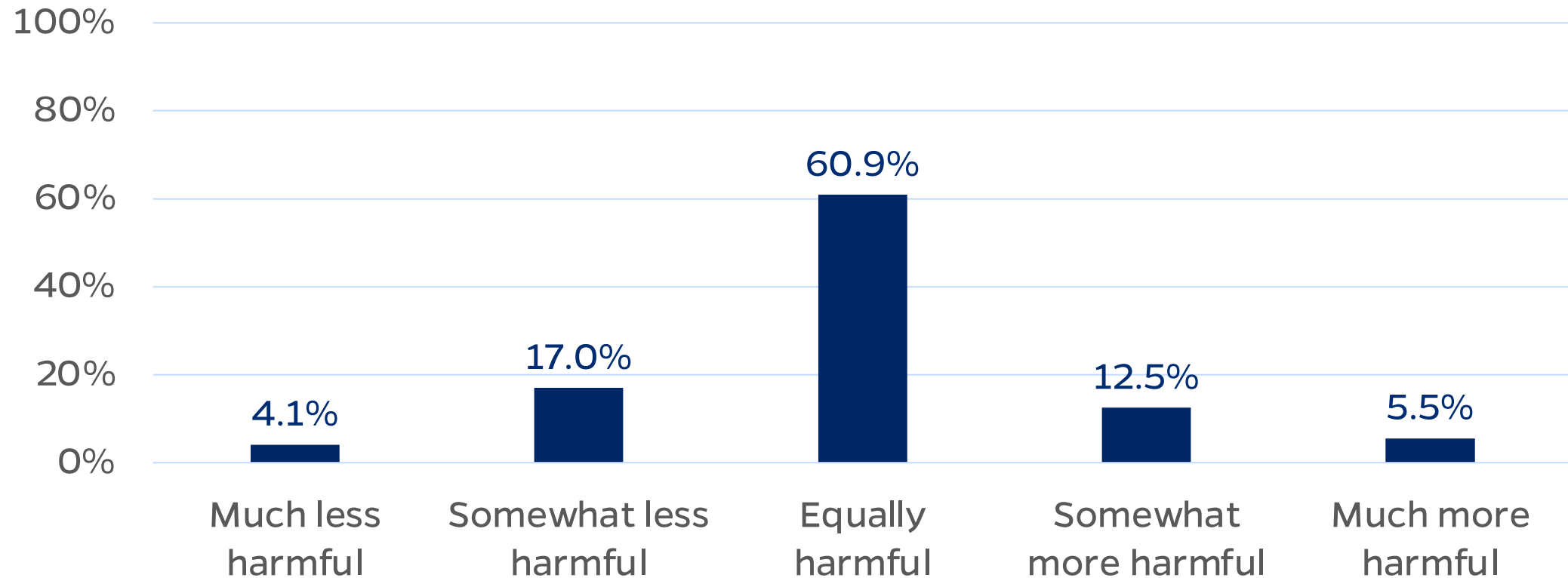
Perception of addiction

Compared to vaping tobacco-derived nicotine, how addictive do you think vaping tobacco-free nicotine is? (n=1163)



Perception of harm

Compared to vaping tobacco-derived nicotine, how harmful to your health do you think vaping tobacco-free nicotine is? (n=1163)





Conclusions

Less than half of participants had previously heard of TFN, but irrespectively, most understood nicotine was present, and tobacco was not

There was less understanding that TFNs are created in a lab from chemicals that did not come from tobacco

Of those who previously heard of TFNs, many reported knowingly using TFN products

The majority perceived TFN and TDN as equally addictive and harmful

These findings are an initial and limited exploration of the survey data. We plan to examine reasons for first and continued use, stratification by smoking status, and estimate unknowing TFN use





Implications for FDA's tobacco regulatory authorities

Better understanding knowledge, awareness, use, and perceptions of tobacco-free nicotine (TFN) provides important context about the consumer to regulators and should help inform their decisions about how to regulate TFN, including its marketing



A large, light blue graphic on the left side of the slide. It features a stylized flame or leaf shape above a grid pattern that resembles a globe or a map. The entire graphic is contained within a rounded rectangular border.

Acknowledgements

Co-authors

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VCU



Thank you!



To learn more about the VAPER Study

