



Australian Government

**GIVE UP
FOR GOOD**

What you need to know about *vaping*



Vaping has rapidly increased in Australia, especially among 14–24 year olds. They are the first generation to be exposed to nicotine mainly through vaping instead of cigarettes.

So, what is vaping?

Don't be confused by the lingo – vapes, mods, tank systems, e-cigs and vape pens are all forms of e-cigarettes.

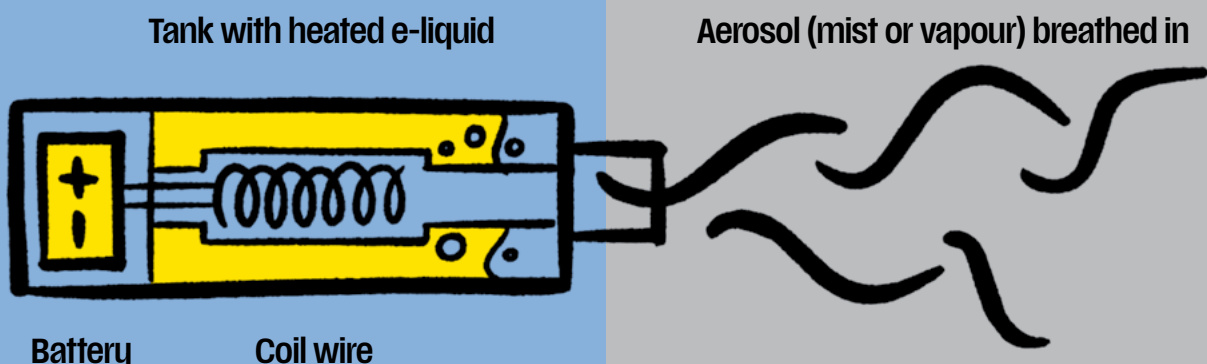
Vaping is the use of an e-cigarette, or 'vape,' a battery-operated device that can look like a cigarette, cigar, pipe or common items like highlighters or a USB. The aerosol (mist or vapour) from vapes is made by heating up liquid chemicals that are breathed in.

Vapes deliver nicotine to the person who is using them and mimics the actions and sensations of smoking. This is commonly referred to as 'vaping.'

Is the vapour created by e-cigarettes safe?

No. Calling the emissions from e-cigarettes 'vapour' gives the impression that it is just steam. This is not the case. The 'cloud' or aerosol that is exhaled while vaping is a mix of gases and tiny droplets of chemicals. When you vape, this fine spray of chemicals enters your body via your lungs, where the small particles can get lodged.

Most vapes in Australia contain nicotine – even when the packaging says they don't. Over 200 unique chemicals have been found in illegal vapes, including harmful substances like formaldehyde, acetone and heavy metals.



Vaping and physical and mental health

Short and long-term vaping is dangerous to your health.

You may experience:

lung inflammation and throat irritation

persistent coughing and wheezing

breathing problems

shortness of breath

permanent lung damage

nausea

nicotine poisoning

nicotine dependence.

The nicotine in vapes is highly addictive and may also affect your mental health.

You may experience nicotine withdrawal symptoms that include:

mood changes

difficulty concentrating

feeling nervous, restless, irritable and/or anxious.

Vaping can cause nicotine dependence and harm a young person's brain, which is still developing until their mid to late 20s. Vaping can harm parts of the brain that control attention, learning and memory. It can also increase the chances of using other addictive substances.



Vaping and nicotine dependence

Most vapes contain nicotine, which is highly addictive. Nicotine activates receptors in the brain. When these receptors are activated, they release a brain chemical called dopamine, which makes you feel good.

As the nicotine levels in the body fade, the brain craves more dopamine. The longer you have been vaping nicotine, the more dopamine you need to feel good.

When you stop vaping, the nicotine level in your blood drops. Your dependency on nicotine may make it hard to concentrate, you may experience changes in mood and might even feel irritable, frustrated, angry or anxious.

This is nicotine addiction.

Australian Government reforms

The Australian Government wants to protect young people from the harms of vaping and nicotine dependence.

The laws around vapes and vaping have changed.

From 1 July 2024, all vapes can only be sold by a pharmacy. It is illegal for non-pharmacy retailers to sell any type of vape.

Where state and territory laws allow, from 1 October 2024, people 18 years or older do not need a prescription to purchase vapes containing nicotine but must talk with a pharmacist before purchasing. Those under 18 need a prescription.



Other changes to make vapes safer include limiting the concentration of nicotine in vapes sold in pharmacies without a prescription to 20 mg/mL. People of any age who require vapes with a higher concentration of nicotine need a prescription.

The law targets commercial and criminal supply of vapes. Individuals, including people under 18 years, who have a vape on them for personal use will not be targeted under changes to the law.

Read more about the new regulations for vapes at [Reforms to the regulation for vapes](#) or at tga.gov.au

Reasons to quit

Quitting vaping is a major step towards improving your physical and mental wellbeing. If you're trying to quit, you might be having cravings and find it difficult to give it up. This is normal. Remind yourself why quitting is good for you and remember that it's okay if it takes a few tries to be completely vape-free – keep going!

How to quit

There are lots of options to support you to quit vaping.

Quitline (13 7848) is a confidential phone service. You can talk to a professional counsellor about ways to quit. In some states and territories you can chat to a counsellor online.

A **GP or a trusted health professional** can give you helpful advice on how to quit.

Share your quitting journey with friends who support your decision.

Remember that lots of young people have found it takes a few tries before they are completely vape-free. It's important to keep trying, even if it takes a few goes before you quit completely.

For more information and help to quit visit health.gov.au/vaping, quit.org.au, download the **My QuitBuddy** app or talk to a health professional.

The My QuitBuddy app includes great features to help you plan and quit successfully. Age restrictions may apply – check your app store for details.

LET'S JOIN THE THOUSANDS
QUITTING VAPES

Find support



health.gov.au/vaping