



Australian Government

**GIVE UP
FOR GOOD**



***Frequently asked
questions*** about vaping
for parents
and carers

LET'S JOIN THE THOUSANDS

QUITTING VAPES

What is vaping?

Vaping is the use of an e-cigarette, or 'vape,' a battery operated device that comes in all shapes and sizes and can look like a cigarette, cigar, pipe, or common items like highlighters or a USB. Vapes are often small enough to fit into a pocket or pencil case. 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.'

Vapes, mods, tank systems, e-cigs and vape pens are all forms of e-cigarettes.

What's in illegal vapes?

The e-liquid in illegal vapes, also known as 'vape juice,' can contain over 200 chemicals, including harmful substances like formaldehyde, nicotine and heavy metals.

Most vapes in Australia contain nicotine – even when the packaging says they don't.

Vapes can have dangerous substances in the liquids and vapour. Some chemicals found in vapes are known to cause cancer, such as:

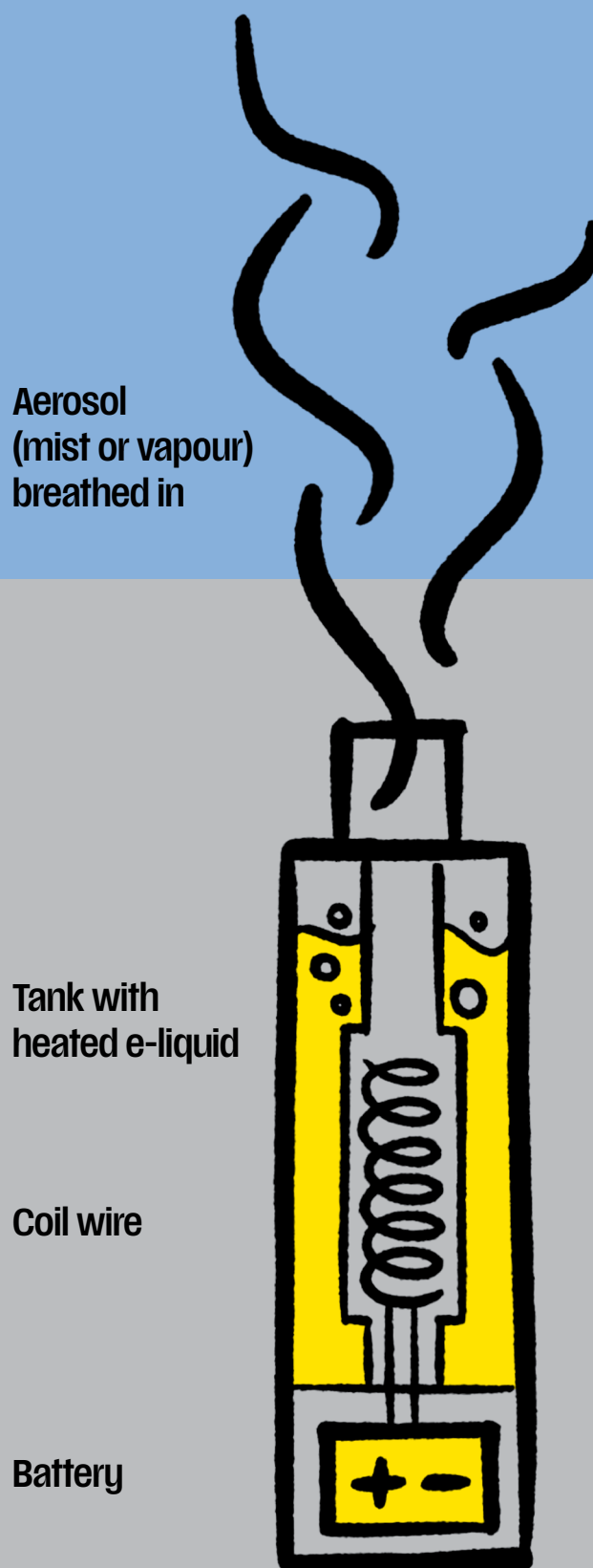
formaldehyde (used in industrial glues and for preserving corpses in hospitals and funeral homes)

acetone (found in some nail polish removers)

acetaldehyde (used in chemicals, perfumes, and plastics)

acrolein (often found in weedkiller)

heavy metals like nickel, tin, and lead.



How does vaping impact physical health?

Both short and long-term vaping is dangerous to your health.

The physical impacts of vaping can include:

lung inflammation and throat irritation

persistent coughing and wheezing

breathing problems

shortness of breath

permanent lung damage

nausea

nicotine poisoning

nicotine dependence.

Vaping in social situations is also damaging to your health, as this can quickly lead to nicotine dependence and the desire to vape more often.

Is the vapour created by e-cigarettes safe?

No. Calling the emissions from e-cigarettes 'vapour' gives the impression 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 people vape, this fine spray of chemicals enters the body through the lungs and can cause many health impacts.

What do illegal vapes smell like?

Illegal vapes often have flavours added to the e-liquid and this can make them smell and taste sweet. Flavours designed to appeal to young people can include fairy floss, fruit punch and cola (but the list of flavours is extensive!).



Why is my child vaping?

Illegal vapes often have sweet flavours that may appeal to young people. They also come in youth-friendly packaging that might include bright colours, cartoons or be made to look like lollies.

Vape advertising may also give young people the impression that vapes are fun, cool and a lower risk option to smoking.

Research has shown vape retailers are intentionally promoting vaping to young people on social media. [Read more here](#) on how social media is being used to promote vaping to young people.

Some of the reasons your child may try vaping include:

they are curious

a desire to fit in with their friends

the appeal of different flavours

to copy actors, models or influencers in movies, video games or social media

a desire to appear grown up and assert independence

copying adults or older siblings who smoke or vape

a misguided view that vaping is safer than smoking.

Can vaping lead to nicotine dependence?

Yes. Most vapes contain nicotine, which is highly addictive because it triggers the release of dopamine in the brain, which makes you feel good.

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

When someone stops vaping, the nicotine level in their blood drops. Their dependency on nicotine may make it hard to concentrate, they may experience changes in mood and might even feel irritable, frustrated, angry or anxious.

This is nicotine addiction.

Can vaping impact mental health?

Yes. The nicotine in vapes is highly addictive and can negatively impact mental health.

Nicotine withdrawal symptoms can include:

mood changes

difficulty concentrating

feeling nervous, restless, irritable and/or anxious.

Vaping during adolescence can cause nicotine dependence and harm parts of the brain that control attention, learning and memory. It can also increase the likelihood of using other addictive substances.

Are people who use vapes more likely to take up tobacco cigarettes?

Yes. Research shows young people who vape, but have never smoked are more likely to take up tobacco smoking compared to young people who have never vaped.

What do the Australian Government reforms to vaping mean?

The Australian Government has changed laws around vapes and vaping to protect young people from the harms of vaping and nicotine dependence.

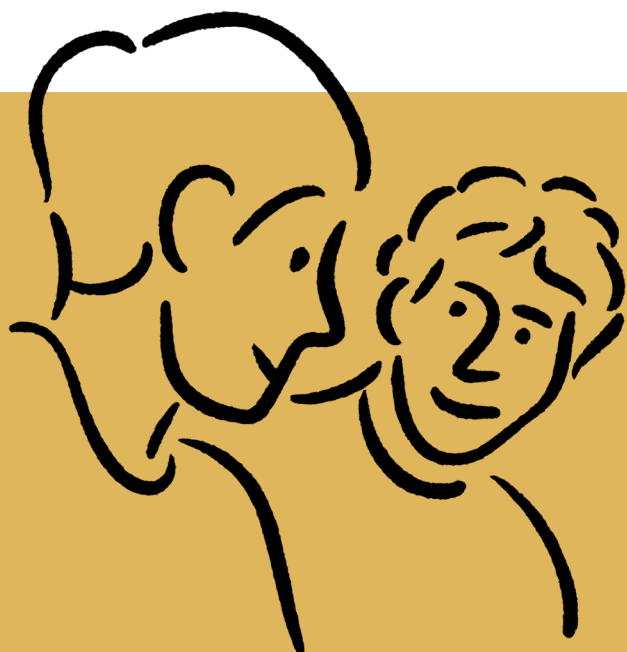
From 1 July 2024, all vapes can only be sold by a pharmacy. It is illegal for non-pharmacy retailers to sell any type of vape.

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.

The concentration of nicotine in vapes sold in pharmacies without a prescription is limited to 20 mg/mL.

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



What can I do as a parent or carer?

Talking to young people about the health risks of vaping is important.

The [Escape the vape: a conversation guide for parents and carers](#), available at health.gov.au/vaping can help you start the conversation with your child or a young person you care about.

Ensure you consider how your own behaviour may impact your child and how the family environment can influence a young person's behaviour. Research has shown children whose parents vape are 64 per cent more likely to vape. If a parent currently smokes, their child's likelihood of smoking increases by 193 per cent.

When talking to your child about vaping, try to:

listen and talk without judgement

be curious and interested in your child's thoughts and feelings

provide a safe environment for two-way conversation – the safer your child feels, the better your conversation will go and the more helpful you can be.



Quitline can guide you through these conversations as well. Quitline counsellors can talk with you about your concerns and provide advice on what you can do as a parent or carer. They can also guide you on how you can start a conversation with your child or a young person you care about.

How to contact Quitline:

Call [13 7848](tel:137848)

Start a chat via [Facebook Messenger](#) or [Whatsapp](#) (VIC, SA, NT and WA)

[Request a call back](#) or live chat at quit.org.au

What's the best way to quit?

There are lots of options to support young people to quit vaping.

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

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

Encourage them to share their quitting journey with friends who support their decision.

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