

Quit or reduce vaping

What is vaping?

Vaping is the act of inhaling and exhaling an aerosol produced by a vaping product, such as an electronic cigarette. The device heats a liquid (usually known as “e-juice” or “vape juice”) into an aerosol.

Vape juice typically contains nicotine and flavouring ingredients dissolved in a liquid mixture. It's made of propylene glycol, glycerol (vegetable glycerin) and other chemicals. Flavouring ingredients include chemicals and blends of chemicals used to make different flavours.

The term "vaping" is also used to refer to the inhalation of cannabis aerosols; however, this page refers specifically to the use of nicotine products.

What are the risks of vaping?

Vaping can impact your health in several ways:

- **Exposure to toxic and cancer-causing chemicals:** the aerosol produced through vaping has been found to contain chemicals and contaminants (such as heavy metals) linked to cancer
- **Nicotine dependence:** nicotine is highly addictive, and results in withdrawal symptoms and cravings when users don't have access to nicotine
- **Cardiovascular health:** vaping can impact arteries and blood vessels, which can increase heart rate and blood pressure
- **Respiratory health:** vaping can irritate the mouth, throat and airways, and worsen symptoms of existing asthma or COPD
- **Risks to children and youth:** using nicotine in adolescence can impact brain development, disrupt cognitive function, and

can permanently alter the parts of the brain that control attention, learning and memory

It's important to consider that vapes are relatively new products. As a result, the long-term impacts to your health are not fully understood. There may be risks that are not yet known. It's important that those who do not currently use commercial tobacco avoid the use of vapes.

Is vaping safer than smoking?

Vaping is less harmful than smoking commercial tobacco products based on current evidence. Compared to cigarettes, a person is exposed to lower amounts of toxic and cancer-causing chemicals when they vape. This does not mean vaping is completely safe as it can still cause harm to a person's health. People who do not smoke should avoid vaping. However, for current smokers who are not ready to quit, switching to vaping until they are ready to quit altogether is a lower-harm option.

If you choose to vape, ensure that you do so only outdoors and avoid exposing others to second-hand aerosol.

Can vaping help me quit smoking?

Some of the best options to help you quit smoking include:

- Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRT), such as a nicotine patch, gum, lozenges or spray
- Cessation medication, such as bupropion or varenicline
- Behavioural counselling (particularly when combined with NRT or cessation medication)

If you have tried the approaches above and been unsuccessful, switching to vaping may reduce the harms to your health. Long-term use of vapes is not recommended, so once

you've made the switch, you should plan to gradually reduce or quit vaping.

Smoking and vaping (dual use)

Using both commercial tobacco and vapes is referred to as "dual use". It should be avoided as it exposes the user to more toxic chemicals that cause health harms. If you are using vaping as a tool to reduce harm or gradually quit nicotine use, it's important to stop using commercial tobacco altogether.

Steps to quitting vaping

Understand your vaping habits

Understanding when, where and why you vape will help you prepare to manage your triggers and cravings.

- Consider tracking your vaping habits for a week
- Record how often you vape each day
- Note the concentration of nicotine you use. Gradually reducing the concentration of nicotine over time may help reduce your level of dependence

Find your "why"

Think about the ways your life may improve through quitting vaping and what motivates you to quit. It may be improved physical or mental health, saving money, or reducing stress and anxiety.

Make a plan

Whether you want to quit immediately or reduce your use over time, set a specific goal for yourself.

- Set a date to start your quit or reduction journey
- Plan ways to distract yourself from cravings and withdrawal, whether it's going for a walk, playing a game on your phone, or talking to a friend
- Seek support from trusted friends, family, health care providers, and resources such as QuitNow or Talk Tobacco
- If you are trying to reduce your use, start by cutting out the vaping sessions that are hardest to eliminate (for many people, this is the first session after waking up)
- Reduce the concentration of your vape juice and increase the amount of time between vaping sessions

Get support

- QuitNow- Free help to quit tobacco or vaping by phone or website. Visit www.quitnow.ca or call 1-877-455-2233. Translation services are available
- Talk Tobacco - A free program for First Nations, Inuit, Métis and urban Indigenous people who want to quit smoking, vaping or using commercial tobacco. Visit <https://smokershelpline.ca/talktobacco> or call 1-833-998-TALK (8255)

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