

# VAPING

What you and your friends need to know.



## Bottom line:

Vaping is **not** harmless and most students aren't doing it.



# What is vaping and how does it work?

Vaping is when you puff (breathe in and out) on a battery-operated device, often called an e-cigarette. You might know of these devices as mods, vapes, vape pens, e-hookahs or tank systems.<sup>1</sup> The e-cigarette contains “e-juice” or vaping liquid. When this is heated, it creates a vapour that can be inhaled through the mouth into the lungs.

## What do vaping devices look like?

Vaping devices come in many shapes and sizes. Some are small and look like a pen or a USB drive while others are larger. A typical vaping device includes:<sup>1</sup>

- a battery
- heating element
- a tank or a pod (pre-filled containers) for the vaping liquid.

The vaping liquid comes in either a bottle with a dropper to fill the e-cigarette’s tank or pods that are inserted into the device.

People who vape aren’t breathing in “water vapour”. They are breathing in a combination of substances and chemicals that may cause harm.<sup>1</sup> Most e-cigarettes also have nicotine, which is a very addictive substance in tobacco. Cannabis can also be vaped.

Many vaping liquids come in different flavours – including mint, fruit, and chocolate – to try to make e-cigarettes more appealing to young people.<sup>1</sup>





# What are the health risks of vaping?

Vaping — even for a short time — can cause problems such as:<sup>1</sup>

- sore mouth or throat
- cough
- shortness of breath
- nausea.

Vaping has health risks. It exposes you to chemicals that may cause health harms, including lung damage.<sup>2</sup> This may also make you more susceptible to COVID-19.<sup>3</sup>



E-cigarettes are also often shared between friends,<sup>4</sup> which can spread illness. If you choose to vape, use these products with extra care and avoid sharing vaping products (including electronic hookah/shisha pipes and cannabis products).

Vaping products with nicotine and/or cannabis can:

- affect brain development, which continues until you are about 25 years old <sup>1</sup>
- affect your learning, memory, attention and concentration <sup>1</sup>
- affect your behaviour <sup>1</sup>
- lead to the development of learning and anxiety disorders <sup>1</sup>
- make symptoms of depression and anxiety worse <sup>5</sup>
- lead to long-term use of cigarettes or e-cigarettes. <sup>1</sup>

Vaping liquids may have high levels of nicotine. This can be dangerous if the e-juice is swallowed, breathed in, or spilled on your skin or in your eyes.<sup>1,6</sup> If you choose to vape, it is important to keep the vaping device in a safe place away from younger children, including your siblings, and pets. If you are unsure if you or a friend has nicotine poisoning, you can call Ontario Poison Centre at 1-800-268-9017 for advice on what symptoms to look out for and whether medical attention is needed.

## What are the laws about vaping?

Federal, provincial and municipal laws work together to protect you. For example, under Ontario's Smoke-Free Ontario Act, 2017, it is against the law to:

- sell or supply tobacco and vaping products to anyone under the age of 19
- use a fake ID to purchase tobacco or vapour products
- vape or hold an activated e-cigarette in certain places, including public areas within 20 meters of school grounds, playgrounds or the grounds of community recreational facilities
- vape in cars or other motor vehicles with anyone younger than 16 present.<sup>7</sup>

Read more at: <https://www.ontario.ca/page/where-you-cant-smoke-or-vape-ontario>.

## What are some facts about vaping?



### Fact 1: Not everyone is vaping.

The reality is that most young people in Ontario don't vape. Three out of four Ontario students in Grades 7 to 12 have not tried an e-cigarette in the past year.<sup>4</sup> The vape industry is trying to make vaping appealing to young people by using cool packaging, flavours, and social media influencers.<sup>1</sup> Don't fall for these marketing strategies that are designed to help these companies make big profits. Make your own decision after knowing the facts.

### Fact 2: Vaping – with or without nicotine – is NOT harmless.

The chemicals in vaping products can be bad for your health.<sup>1</sup> To protect your health, the best thing to do is to avoid using any product that contains nicotine. But even if your vaping product doesn't use nicotine, it could still cause you harm. If you are not vaping, it's better to not start.

### Fact 3: Using e-cigarettes is NOT a proven strategy to help you quit smoking.

The vape industry claims that vaping will help you to quit smoking, but research shows that there's a greater risk it will lead you to start smoking tobacco cigarettes.<sup>1,8</sup> If you want to quit smoking, take a look at some proven supports in *Get help* section below.

## What do I do if I'm offered a vape?

Knowing the facts and how vaping affects your health can help you make an informed choice about vaping. If a friend offers you a vape, there are many different ways you can respond. Here are just a few examples:

- "Nah, I don't want to get sick. I'd rather not share an e-cigarette."
- "I saw in the news that some people ended up in the hospital after vaping. I don't want that to happen to me."
- "Sorry, I'm late for class. I've got to go."
- "I play (sport/activity). I need all the air I can get."

## Where can I get more information?

### About vaping

<https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/smoking-tobacco/vaping.html>

### Consequences of vaping

<https://www.canada.ca/en/services/health/campaigns/vaping.html>

## Getting help

If you or a friend need help to quit vaping or smoking, the first step is to talk to someone you trust. This could be a parent/guardian, family member, teacher, coach or guidance counsellor. If you are not ready to talk to someone you know, you can connect with a counsellor at Kids Help Phone by calling 1-800-668-6868, texting CONNECT to 686868 or visiting [www.kidshelpphone.ca](http://www.kidshelpphone.ca). Any conversation you have with Kids Help Phone is private.

You can also contact a free Quit Coach for confidential support over the phone by calling Telehealth Ontario at 1-866-797-0000 or toll-free at 1-866-797-0007. The Canadian Cancer Society's Smokers' Helpline also offers services to help you quit smoking. You can access these services online at [www.smokershelpline.ca](http://www.smokershelpline.ca) or by texting iQuit to 123456.

# References

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