

# Vaping and *your health*



## What are e-cigarettes?

E-cigarettes, also known as 'vapes,' are **electronic devices** that heat a liquid (or 'juice') to create an aerosol (or spray) that can be **inhaled**. Using an e-cigarette is often called '**vaping**.' E-cigarettes come in **all shapes and sizes** and can look like a highlighter, a pen or USB.

Some people think the 'cloud' or 'smoke' from vaping is a vapour, like steam. It's not. It is really **an aerosol**, a fine spray of **chemicals** that enters your body through your lungs, where small particles can **get stuck in the lungs**.

## What's inside an e-cigarette?

An e-cigarette contains **many different chemicals** – some we know can be **harmful to breathe in**, and many **haven't been tested** at all. Some chemicals found in aerosols can **cause cancer**, others can **cause swelling and irritation in the throat and lungs** and can impact the **heart**. We don't know which chemicals are in which products because there is no law that forces companies to list all their ingredients.

Even though the packaging might not say it, **most e-cigarettes in Australia contain nicotine**.



## How vaping affects your body

Vaping can cause harm to your body even if you use e-cigarettes without nicotine. We know that vaping can cause vomiting, nausea, coughing, shortness of breath, mouth irritation, lung injury, and seizures.



E-cigarettes have not been around long enough to know what the long-term harms of vaping are, but experts are worried that it might increase the risk of **cancer**, **heart disease**, or **lung disease**.

**Other risks:** nicotine is a **poison** and can make you very sick or even die if swallowed accidentally. There have also been cases of e-cigarettes **exploding** and **catching fire**, which has caused severe burns. Nicotine can also harm teenagers' growing brains.



## How vaping can lead to addiction

- **Nicotine is a very addictive** drug that is found in most e-cigarettes in Australia, even when the label doesn't say so.
- Some e-cigarettes can contain as much nicotine as a whole packet of cigarettes.
- Your brain is still growing until you are 25 years old, and nicotine can change the way it grows, which may **affect your attention, memory, and learning**
- Nicotine **addiction happens fast**, which makes it hard to stop vaping and increases the chance you'll start smoking cigarettes to get that nicotine 'hit'.

