

TALKING WITH TEENS ABOUT VAPING

TIP SHEET



Get more information: Canada.ca/vaping-info

BEFORE THE TALK: GET THE FACTS

Vaping is not harmless

- › Vaping can increase your exposure to harmful chemicals.
- › Vaping can lead to nicotine addiction.
- › The long-term consequences of vaping are unknown.
- › It's rare, but defective vaping products (especially batteries) may catch fire or explode, leading to burns and injuries.

Risks of nicotine

Nicotine is a highly addictive chemical. Youth are especially susceptible to its negative effects, as it can alter their brain development and can affect memory and concentration. It can also lead to addiction and physical dependence. Children and youth may become dependent on nicotine more rapidly than adults.

Although not all vaping products contain nicotine, the majority of them do, and the level of nicotine can vary widely. Some vaping liquids have low levels, but many have levels of nicotine similar to or higher than that of a typical cigarette. Quitting vaping can be challenging once a teen has developed an addiction to nicotine. Nicotine withdrawal symptoms can be unpleasant. Even if a vaping product does not contain nicotine, there is still a risk of being exposed to other harmful chemicals.

Vaping nicotine can alter teen brain development.

Vaping versus smoking

For people who smoke, completely replacing cigarette smoking with vaping will reduce their exposure to harmful chemicals. However, it is not safe for youth to use any nicotine products, including cigarettes and vaping products.

Vaping liquids

The ingredients typically found in vaping liquids include glycerol, flavours, propylene glycol and varying levels of nicotine. The long-term safety of inhaling these substances in vaping products is unknown and continues to be assessed. There is no burning during vaping; instead, the liquid is heated. This process can cause reactions and create new chemicals, such as formaldehyde. Some contaminants, such as metals, might also get into the vaping products and then into the aerosol.

Did you know?

- › Data from a recent Health Canada survey showed that 23% of students in grades 7–12 have tried an electronic cigarette.
- › Vaping devices may also be used for other substances such as cannabis.
- › Vaping products can be difficult to recognize:
 - Devices come in a variety of shapes and sizes, and some resemble a USB flash drive;
 - Liquids can have high levels of nicotine and come in a variety of flavours;
 - Vaping may not leave a lingering identifiable smell; and
 - Add-ons like vinyl “skins” or wraps can also render these items harder to recognize.
- › Vaping products have many names, such as e-cigarettes, vape pens, vapes, mods, tanks and e-hookahs. They may also be known by various brand names.
- › The *Tobacco and Vaping Products Act* prohibits vaping products to be sold or given to anyone under the age of 18. Be aware of the laws in your province or territory, as some have increased the age to 19.