



# Questions and Answers on Vaping: What Parents Need to Know

## What exactly is vaping?

Vaping is the inhaling of a vapor created by an electronic cigarette (e-cigarette) or other battery-powered vaping device.



## Isn't the vapour being inhaled just smoke or steam?

No. Vaping devices usually contain an aerosol consisting of fine particles, containing varying amounts of propylene glycol, glycerin, flavourings and other chemicals. E-cigarettes also contain nicotine. Some vaping devices have been adapted for use with cannabis or its components (THC, hash oil) or other substances.

## What Are the Risks of Vaping for Young People?

Vaping among youth is on the rise across Canada. This is concerning for a few reasons.

- **There are health risks linked to the chemicals found in vape products and long term effects of vaping are still unknown.** Lung illnesses and deaths in the United States are being associated with the use of vaping products and health officials here in Canada are actively monitoring the situation as it unfolds.
- **Youth vaping may lead to tobacco use.** Youth are more vulnerable to addiction because their brains are still developing. There are concerns that adolescent vapour product users may begin smoking tobacco products. Research suggests teens who vape are twice as likely to start smoking tobacco cigarettes.
- **Vaping liquid can be toxic.** Even small amounts of e-juice can be poisonous to a young child if ingested and can be toxic if spilled on the skin.
- **The device itself can be harmful.** Defective batteries in vaping devices have caused some fires and explosions.

## What Can Parents and Caregivers Do?

- **Start a conversation.** Talk with your children and teens about the risks of vaping. Check out <https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/smoking-tobacco/vaping/risks.html> for more information.
- **Be a positive role model.** Don't smoke or vape around children or youth
- **Don't buy or give vapour or tobacco products to minors.**

- **Store vaping products safely.** Keep vapour products, including their nicotine refills and empty cartridges, out of the reach of children and youth.

### **What About People Who Already Smoke? Isn't Vaping Better for You?**

This is debatable. While the vapour from vaping products may contain fewer chemicals than cigarette smoke, harmful chemicals and contaminants are still present. During the vaping process, the liquid is heated; this process creates new volatile chemicals (e.g., formaldehyde), contaminants (e.g., nickel, tin and aluminium) and particulate matter in the vapour that is inhalable by the user and bystanders as second hand vapour exposure. The truth is we really don't know the long term effects of vaping on human health, yet.

### **What Should You or Your Family Member do if they are Vaping?**

If you or your family member are using vaping products, we recommend everyone try their very best to stop now. If you or your family member are using vaping products and cannot quit, monitor for symptoms such as difficulty breathing, shortness of breath, or chest pain and promptly seek medical attention if you have concerns about your health.



### **Need Help Quitting?**

If you or your family member smoke or vape and are having trouble quitting, talk to a health care provider. The NWT Quitline (1-866-286-5099) is available 24/7 to support residents who want to quit smoking. Nicotine replacement therapy is always covered in NWT with a prescription. Contact the GNWT Health Services Administration office at 1-800-661-0830 ext. 0 for more information.

### **What is the Government of the NWT Doing About All This?**

Health Officials in the NWT are actively monitoring the developments around the health effects of vaping and will keep the public informed as new information becomes available.

Two new bills, Bill 40 Smoking Control and Reduction Act and Bill 41 Tobacco and Vapour Products Control Act were developed to protect the public, particularly children and youth, from a variety of second hand smoke exposure; and deter uptake by children and youth.

The Department is currently working to bring these Bills into force. They will align the NWT with increasing tobacco and vapour product control measures taking place across Canada and focus on where smoking is permitted and how tobacco and vaping products can be advertised and sold in the NWT.