

# VAPE CHECK

## Worker's notes

This tool is designed to help a worker have a conversation with someone who is frequently using unregulated vapes. That is, vapes purchased without a prescription. It is not designed to be used with people who have never vaped, only vaped once or twice, or adults who are vaping to reduce harm from tobacco smoking.

This icon  indicates a conversation point.

A guide to using this tool can be found at [www.dovetail.org.au](http://www.dovetail.org.au)

This tool will provide you with some useful information and practical tips about vaping. It only takes about 10-15 minutes to complete.



There are no health benefits from vaping for people who don't smoke tobacco. For people who regularly smoke, evidence suggests switching to vaping may be less harmful, but not harmless. Long-term harms of vaping are unknown.

## 1 START HERE

### In the past 3 months, how often have you smoked tobacco?

- Never
- Once or twice only
- A few times a month
- A few times a week
- Daily/almost daily

What age did you first start vaping?

### In the past 3 months, how often have you vaped?

- Never
- Once or twice only
- A few times a month
- A few times a week
- Daily/almost daily

Since you started, has your vape use:

- Increased?
- Decreased?
- Stayed the same?



Most unregulated vapes in Australia contain nicotine even if the label says otherwise. Nicotine is the same chemical in cigarettes that makes you addicted.

## 2

### The following questions will help us work out if you are becoming addicted to nicotine (tick all that apply)

- Have you ever tried to stop vaping, but couldn't?
- Do you need to vape if you're feeling stressed?
- Do you ever have strong cravings/urges to vape?
- Is it hard to keep from vaping in places where you are not supposed to, like school, work or home?
- Do you find it hard to concentrate, or do you get anxious, restless, or irritable if you haven't vaped in a while?
- Do you feel stressed if you can't find your vape or it runs out?

Answering yes to any of these may indicate possible nicotine addiction.



What do you think about this?

**Dovetail**

Supporting the youth alcohol and other drug sector in Queensland

# 3

## If you buy your vapes...

How often do you buy a new one?

\$ What does it cost you?

\$ How much would this be per year?  
(You may need a calculator for this section).

## What else could you do with this money?

## What do you like about vaping?

E.g. it's fun to do with friends, I like the taste, I find it relaxing

It's good to know the reasons why you vape.

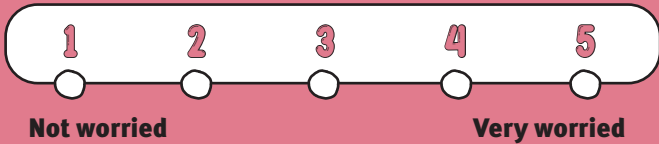
## What are the not so good things about vaping?

E.g. I can't leave the house without it, I'm getting in trouble at school

It's helpful to think about ways to reduce negative impacts (even if you're not ready to stop) and keep an eye out if these impacts are getting worse or if the list is growing.

# 4

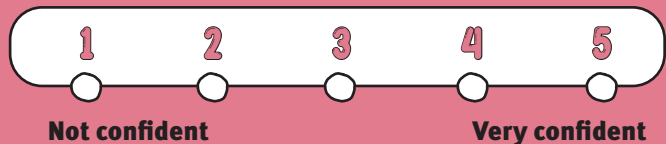
## On a scale from 1-5, how worried are you about your vaping?



## What would you like to do about your vaping? (tick)

- I want to cut back vaping
- I want to quit vaping
- I don't want to cut back or quit vaping right now (skip to section 6)

## If you want to cut back or quit, how confident are you that you can make it happen?





Cutting back or quitting can be easy for some people and hard for others. You may experience withdrawal symptoms – things like difficulty concentrating, being irritable, feeling anxious or having cravings to vape. These withdrawal symptoms will fade within a couple of weeks.

**My goal is to...** (e.g. cut back to 1 vape a month, stop vaping at school/work, improve my fitness, quit by Christmas)

**I'm making a change because...**

**People who could support me...**

**Things which might make it hard to reach my goal...**

**Some steps to help reach my goal are...**

Tip: include steps that use your support people, and come up with a plan to deal with the things that might make it hard to reach your goal.

#### Other strategies you might like to try (tick)

**Resist the urge to vape with the “3Ds”**

**Delay:** If you can delay the decision to vape for a few minutes or more, a craving (urge) can pass on its own.

**Distract:** It's easier to delay the decision if you are doing something to distract yourself (e.g. Snapchat a friend, go for a walk, look at Instagram, listen to music, have a lolly the same flavour as your usual vape, drink some water).

**Deep breathing:** breathing and other relaxation techniques can help you to stay calm during a craving.

*Remember: cravings are like a stray cat – if you keep feeding them, they will keep coming back.*

**Reduce the temptation to vape**

If your goal is to quit vaping, throw your vape out. If your plan is to cut back, put your vape out of reach between use so you're not tempted to use it more. To avoid vaping in places you shouldn't (like schools/public indoor spaces), leave your vape at home.

**Learn relaxation strategies**

Learning relaxation strategies can help reduce stress, manage cravings and improve overall physical and mental health. Apps about relaxation or mindfulness can be helpful.



Your GP or Quitline can help with strategies and explore options like nicotine replacement therapy (NRT) including patches, lozenges, or gum to help manage nicotine withdrawals and cravings.

# 6

## Reducing harm from vaping

The long-term harms of vaping are unknown, so the safest option is to not vape at all. However, for those that choose to vape, there are some strategies to help reduce risk of harm. **Tick the strategies that you think might work for you:**

Yes No Maybe



### Monitor your mental health

Nicotine addiction can impact your mood and make conditions like anxiety or depression worse. Monitor your mood and seek support if you're worried.



### Set limits

Set limits on your vaping, try taking fewer puffs and put your vape out of reach so you are tempted to use less often.



### Try to avoid getting "nic sick"

Too much nicotine makes you "nic sick" (e.g. head spins followed by headaches and nausea). Unregulated vapes have varying levels of nicotine. If you are trying a new flavour or brand, start with one puff and allow time for the nicotine to take effect before inhaling again.



### Only use vapes as they are intended to be used

It's unsafe to refill or recharge a disposable vape. Internal parts wear out, exposing you to toxic chemicals, and tampering with batteries can cause fires.



### Avoid using your device dry

When a vape runs out of liquid, the internal parts start to burn, releasing foul tasting toxic chemicals. This is called "dry puffing". Get a new vape, or top up re-fillable devices when the liquid is low.



### Avoid vaping in places where vaping is not allowed

By law you can't vape where you can't smoke. If you struggle with this, you might be addicted to nicotine. If so, discuss your options with a health professional. This might include nicotine replacement therapy (NRT) like patches, sprays or lozenges to reduce cravings.



### Quit tobacco smoking

If you also smoke cigarettes, switch to vaping only. Once you feel confident you won't go back to smoking tobacco, consider quitting vaping too.



### Get a prescription

Switch to prescribed nicotine. Unregulated vapes can contain varying amounts of nicotine and unlisted ingredients including toxic chemicals that are harmful to you and the environment.

My next steps will be to...

### It might also help to...

- Catch up again to discuss my progress
- See a doctor or other health professional
- Call Quitline 13 78 48 for free confidential support to quit vaping

### Warning

Store nicotine liquid away from children and pets. Nicotine liquid can be absorbed through the skin and is toxic when ingested. Call the Poisons Information Centre on 13 11 26 if you are concerned, and call triple zero (000) in an emergency.