

# KNOW YOUR STUFF

# VAPING

AKA: e-cigs, e-liquids, vape pens/sticks, puff bars & brand names



## WHAT IS IT?

Vapes heat a liquid (sometimes called juice) that typically contains nicotine, flavourings and other chemicals, to create a vapour that is inhaled. Vapes come in lots of different shapes and sizes, they may be disposable, rechargeable or refillable.

## THE HIGHS

Nicotine in vapes causes an adrenaline surge which can make someone feel more alert, and also activates the part of the brain involved in pleasure.

## THE LOWS

First time vapers are likely to feel dizzy, nauseous, and may feel like their heart is racing. It can also cause coughing, dry or irritated mouth and throat, headache, stomach ache, and feeling out of breath. Nicotine is a drug, so mixing with other drugs – including medicines – can cause other side effects.

Vaping is recommended as a way to help smokers quit, because it reduces exposure to toxic substances such as tar and carbon monoxide. But someone who vapes inhales around 2,000 chemicals, and they haven't all been identified, let alone their long-term effects established, but reported issues include problems with the lungs.

Because they are used as a quit aid, most vapes contain nicotine, which is highly addictive – and more so for younger people. It is easy to underestimate the amount of nicotine in a vape, with some legal disposable vapes containing the equivalent of nearly 50 cigarettes, and this means dependence can develop quickly. Giving up nicotine can be hard as the body has to readjust to being without it, meaning symptoms such as cravings, mood changes, anxiety and headaches may happen as a result of trying to withdraw from it.

Vapes are illegal for sale to under 18s, and there are moves to tighten up enforcement of the rules across the UK, plus restrict flavours and packaging features such as bright colours, through the Tobacco and Vapes Bill going through Parliament at the time of writing.

A growing issue is the number of vapes that contain drugs other than nicotine, with the most common being THC (the main drug in cannabis) and Spice (a synthetic form of cannabis). Both are potent drugs with many unpleasant effects, and someone who hasn't experienced them before, or uses one of these vapes without knowing what it contains, is at increased risk of issues – some young people have ended up in hospital. These products are also completely illegal, so won't have been through any checks at all in terms of their safety.



For more information go to:

**FRANK**

<https://www.talktofrank.com/drug/vapes>



**DSM** foundation  
The drug education charity

[www.dsmfoundation.org.uk](http://www.dsmfoundation.org.uk)

The Wellbeing Hub  
— from Teen Tips —



[www.teentips.co.uk](http://www.teentips.co.uk)