

# Vaping: 5 things to consider

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While vaping can serve as an alternative to cigarette smoking, it still poses inherent risks, especially for young adults. Most vape products contain nicotine, the same highly addictive chemical found in cigarettes. There is no regulated list of chemicals in vape products, and these chemicals can have unknown health consequences. There is currently an

outbreak of lung disease in the U.S. associated with vaping nicotine and THC.

Reported symptoms of lung disease include:

- Coughing, shortness of breath and chest pain
- Nausea, vomiting and diarrhea
- Fatigue, fever and abdominal pain

If you choose to vape, here are some things to consider:

## **Opt for nicotine-free or low-dose products**

While most vape oils contain [nicotine](#), there are a number of options available that are nicotine-free. These can be a better alternative for those who vape but want to avoid the addictive effects. If you do choose to use nicotine-based products, look for lower-dose options (1.5-3 mg). Opting for lower nicotine levels can help to satisfy cravings without overloading your system.

## **Not all vapes are equal**

Dosage matters, but the [device](#) you use is just as important. Power (wattage) can vary from device to device. Knowing the wattage of your device can help you make better decisions around dosage. High-powered devices (20+ watts), should be used with low dose oils (less than 3 mg) in order to reduce adverse side effects.

## **Know your limits**

It's important to know your limits when it comes to nicotine, especially if you are new to nicotine. Your tolerance may not be as high as those that

use more regularly, so start slow. Consuming too much nicotine can cause negative side effects, including:

- Nausea, vomiting, diarrhea or stomach ache
- Eye irritation
- Headaches
- Anxiety and restlessness
- Sweating
- Confusion
- Difficulty breathing
- Tremors
- Seizures

If you experience any of these symptoms within the first 15-60 minutes of vaping, call the Poison Control Center at 800-222-1222, and follow-up with your healthcare provider.

You may also want to consider reducing how often and how much you vape, which can reduce the chances of unwanted health consequences. If you're a regular smoker or tobacco user, consider lowering your nicotine dose by at least one level when vaping.

## **Use proper disposal methods**

Did you know vape products are considered [hazardous materials](#) and should never be thrown away in normal trash or recycling bins? Devices, pods and batteries can be disposed of in designated drop boxes. Drop boxes are available in the Health Promotion office on the 3rd floor of Wardenburg Health Center and at the West Boulder Recycling Center on 63rd Street.

## **Avoid sharing**

Sharing with friends may mean you're getting higher doses of nicotine than you're used to. It can also expose you to a number of diseases including the common cold, flu, mono and meningitis, which can be transferred from person to person through saliva. Keep yourself healthy and safe by using your own vape and keeping it clean.

Provided by University of Colorado at Boulder

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