

THE **EX-SMOKERS'** GUIDE TO BEING VAPEFREE

Use this guide
to help you
feel more
confident about
remaining
smokefree and
vapefree



PROTECT YOUR QUIT

Wait until you are confident about staying smokefree — without a single puff of tobacco — before you make a plan to stop vaping



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Vaping is less harmful than smoking tobacco but not harmless. There may be health risks associated with long-term vaping, so ideally it's best to be smokefree and vapefree.

Symptoms you may experience when quitting vaping

- Craving/urges to use
- Low mood
- Irritability, anger, or frustration
- Disturbed sleep
- Difficulty concentrating
- Increased appetite

These symptoms will not last long. Most will disappear within four weeks of stopping vaping.

STRATEGIES AND TIPS

Here are a few approaches you might like to try.

Gradual reduction

Some people like to gradually reduce their nicotine use. Here are some tips that may help:

- Monitor your refills and keep a record of when you make changes to the nicotine dose.
- Set goals to reduce every 2 to 4 weeks or longer. There is no need to rush the process.
- Slowly reduce the nicotine strength and amount of liquid you use.
- Manage the speed of your reduction. If you have recently quit smoking or feel at risk of relapse, reduce slowly.
- Think about using two vapes (one for your existing strength and another at a lower strength). Use the lower strength as much as possible.
- Stay on the lower strength until you feel ready to drop down to the next reduced level.

- If you vape more on a lower dose, go back to the strength you were using.

General tips

- Set rules about when and where you vape. This is an approach that can help you vape less. For example, only vape outside your home or car, or only during work breaks. This helps weaken the link between vaping and key times or situations (triggers).
- Keep the vape out of sight. Chose not to carry it at times. For example, put it in the boot when driving.
- Find people to support and distract you from vaping. For example, go for a walk together after a meal.
- Change to a flavour you like less.
- Monitor how often you refill the tank or start a new pod. Set goals and plan rewards for reaching them.

Triggers and how to avoid them

Be kind to yourself. Avoid smoking or vaping triggers if you can.

- Make vaping a stand-alone task. Separate it from other activities such as having hot drinks or socialising.
- Be aware of your vaping habits. Why do you want to vape? Do you have cravings or have you been prompted by an everyday trigger?



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- Find other ways to respond to triggers such as deep breathing, drinking water, chewing gum, or having sugar-free mints.
- Extend the time between vaping. Do not immediately respond to a trigger. Start with a 5-minute delay and then slowly extend this.

RELAPSE PREVENTION

Stop smoking all tobacco (including when it's small amounts mixed with cannabis) before you make changes to stop vaping.

Find and practise healthy ways to manage your mood or stress levels.

Here are some useful websites:

- smallsteps.org.nz
- justathought.co.nz



If you get strong urges to smoke, or withdrawal symptoms, or feel like you might go back to smoking, increase your nicotine dose or vape use until these feelings go away.

Going back to vaping isn't a failure. It's less harmful than smoking.

FURTHER SUPPORT

- Seek support from family, friends or co-workers.
- Find a quit-vaping buddy.
- Your Quit Coach is available for more advice if needed.

PROTECTING YOUTH FROM VAPING

Be open with young people about why you are vaping. Explain that these devices are not for people under 18 or people who don't smoke. Store the vape responsibly and out of the reach of children. Vapes can be addictive and affect young people's learning and behaviour. Never give a vape to minors.



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STOP SMOKING SERVICES

smokefree.org.nz/help-advice/stop-smoking-services

This guide was originally developed by the Nelson Marlborough Stop Smoking Service team.

This resource should be used after a discussion with your Quit Coach.

NOTES:

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