



2022 CEO Statement on Electronic Cigarettes: Plain English Summary



The CEO Statement provides public health advice on the safety and impacts of electronic cigarettes (e-cigarettes) based on review of the current evidence.

About e-cigarettes

- E-cigarettes¹ heat liquid containing chemicals (e-liquids) that users breathe in. Using an e-cigarette is also known as vaping.
- There are many different types of e-cigarettes. The way e-cigarettes are made and used varies. This variability makes it hard to know if they are safe or if they can harm your health.

Product safety

- E-liquids can contain nicotine (even when labelled 'nicotine-free') and many other chemicals. More than 200 chemicals have been detected in e-liquids.
- E-cigarettes can be harmful. All e-cigarette users are exposed to chemicals and toxins that can harm your health.
- Use of e-cigarettes can result in serious burns and injuries. In some cases, these burns and injuries have resulted in death. Poor-quality e-cigarette batteries or high-power devices increase the risk of explosions that can cause serious burns and injuries.

Health effects

- Use of e-cigarettes can result in seizures in some users.
- Exposure to e-liquids that contain nicotine can result in poisoning for some users which, although it may not happen to everyone, can be severe and cause death.
- E-cigarette-related calls to Australian Poisons Information Centres have increased over the past 5 years. Most poisonings occur in toddlers and adults.
- Use of e-cigarettes can result in a serious and sometimes fatal lung condition known as E-cigarette or Vaping Associated Lung Injury (EVALI) in some users. Most cases of EVALI reported in the United States of America were linked to cannabis oils and vitamin E acetate, but other chemicals may also contribute to this condition.
- Use of e-cigarettes that contain nicotine probably results in throat irritation, cough, dizziness, headaches and nausea.
- There is not enough information from human research studies to know about the potential impacts of e-cigarette use on conditions such as cancer and cardiovascular disease, reproductive health, respiratory conditions (e.g. asthma) and mental illness.
- Lack of information does not mean that e-cigarettes are safe. More information is needed to know if long-term e-cigarette use is safe or if it harms your health.

¹ Electronic cigarettes are also known as e-cigarettes, e-cigs, electronic nicotine delivery systems (ENDS), electronic non-nicotine delivery systems (ENNDS), alternative nicotine delivery systems, personal vaporisers, e-hookahs, vape pens or vapes.

Specific health effects by tobacco smoking status

In addition to the health effects listed above:

If you **have never smoked tobacco cigarettes** and you use or are thinking of using e-cigarettes

- There are no health benefits of using e-cigarettes if you do not currently smoke tobacco cigarettes.
- You can become addicted if you use e-cigarettes that contain nicotine.

If you are a **current tobacco smoker** and you use or are thinking of using e-cigarettes

- You will probably experience immediate increases in heart rates and blood pressure and stiffening of the arteries if you use e-cigarettes.
- You may become addicted to e-cigarettes if they contain nicotine and you may use e-cigarettes in excess.

If you are a **former tobacco smoker** and you use or are thinking of using e-cigarettes

- You may experience a decrease in blood pressure after you have switched.

E-cigarette use and uptake

- E-cigarette use has increased in Australia since 2016. This increase has been reported across most age groups, especially among youth and young adults.
- Teenagers are more likely to try e-cigarettes if they are exposed to e-cigarettes on social media.
- More information is needed on what makes e-cigarettes appealing, such as flavours, packaging and price.

E-cigarette use and tobacco smoking

Tobacco smoking uptake

If you **have never smoked tobacco cigarettes** and you use or are thinking of using e-cigarettes

- You are more likely to try tobacco smoking or become a tobacco smoker if you use e-cigarettes.

Tobacco smoking cessation

If you are a **current tobacco smoker** and you use or are thinking of using e-cigarettes

- There are other proven safe and effective options to help you quit smoking. E-cigarettes are not proven safe and effective smoking cessation aids.
- Short-term e-cigarette use may benefit you if you are able to quit smoking and have been previously unsuccessful with other smoking cessation aids. However, not everyone finds e-cigarettes helpful for quitting.

- Research studies have found that it was more common for smokers to become dual users (using both e-cigarettes and tobacco products at the same time) than quit if they used nicotine e-cigarettes.
- For some smokers, using nicotine e-cigarettes may assist them to quit; however, more research is needed to confirm the harms and benefits of using them for this purpose.
- For additional assistance to quit tobacco smoking or quit e-cigarettes you are encouraged to seek further information from reliable sources, such as your healthcare practitioner or [quit services](#).

Relapse to tobacco smoking

If you are a **former tobacco smoker** and you use or are thinking of using e-cigarettes

- Using an e-cigarette may increase your chance of smoking relapse.

