

Congratulations

on taking the first steps to
a smoke and vape-free life!

Quitting is one of the best decisions you can make for your health and wellbeing. You will feel stronger, more in control and breathe easier.

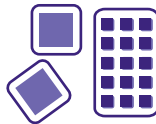
This Quit Kit is your personal guide to quitting smoking, vaping or other nicotine products. With support from a NSW Quitline counsellor, this Quit Kit can help you:



Make your own quit plan



Manage cravings and triggers



Learn about products and medications that can help you quit



Feel supported throughout your quit journey

We're here to help.

Call **NSW Quitline** on **13 7848** or visit **iCanQuit.com.au** for more information, tools and support.

One breath at a time

Your guide to quit smoking and vaping



Acknowledgements

Publisher

Cancer Institute NSW
Level 4, 1 Reserve Road
St Leonards, NSW 2065
Locked Bag 2030
St Leonards NSW 1590

T: (02) 8374 5600
E: information@cancer.nsw.gov.au
W: cancer.nsw.gov.au

SHPN: (CI) 251105
ISBN:978-1-74231-332-0 (print)
978-1-74231-333-7 (online)
SC2526001085
HPRM: E26/02928

Suggested citation

Cancer Institute NSW. One breath at a time: Your guide to quit smoking and vaping. Sydney: Cancer Institute NSW, 2026.

Copyright

© Cancer Institute NSW 2026. This work is copyright. It may be reproduced in whole or part for study or training purposes subject to the inclusion of acknowledgement of the source. It may not be reproduced for commercial usage or sale. Reproduction for purposes other than those indicated above requires written permission from the Cancer Institute NSW.



Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge the Traditional Owners of Country throughout Australia and recognise the continuing connection to lands, waters and communities. We pay our respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, and to Elders past and present.

NSW Quitline is committed to better health outcomes for Aboriginal communities; and aim to work with Aboriginal people to reduce the high smoking rates that occur as a result of colonisation.

We advise this resource may contain images, or names of deceased persons in photographs or historical content.

Acknowledging people with lived experience of cancer

It is through listening to those impacted by cancer that we gather the information necessary to move towards the cancer system NSW needs. Every person's story we hear, every experience shared, helps to develop our understanding of what's required to best meet the needs of people diagnosed with cancer, their loved ones and their health teams.

Contents

1. Introduction	4
2. Benefits of quitting smoking or vaping	5
3. Motivations to quit	6
4. Getting ready to quit	8
What is nicotine dependence and withdrawal?	8
Knowing your triggers: why and when you smoke or vape	9
Previous quitting experiences: Reflection	10
5. What to expect when you quit and how to manage	12
What happens to your body when you quit	12
Cravings and triggers	14
Looking after your health and wellbeing while quitting	18
6. Ways to quit	21
Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRT)	23
Prescription medications	24
Vaping to quit smoking	24
Alternative therapies	25
7. Making a quit plan	26
8. Slip-ups are normal, not a sign you've failed	28
9. Free support available	29

1. Introduction

Congratulations on taking this first step to a smoke-free and vape-free life!

Starting a quit journey is one of the best decisions you can make for yourself and the people you care about.

This booklet is designed to help you create a plan and support you with practical tools, real stories, and helpful tips to guide you through each step, whether you're quitting smoking, vaping, or other nicotine products.

This is your personal guide to quitting. Use it in whatever way works best for you: highlight what inspires you, note down your thoughts, or save helpful tips in your phone or on sticky notes somewhere you'll see them every day.

Quitting isn't always easy, but every step you take and every attempt you make brings you closer to quitting for good. Be proud of your efforts and know that support is available.

There are many resources to help you quit. It's important to choose programs that are trusted, backed by strong evidence, and can give you the best chance of quitting for good. NSW Health have free services and supports shown in the purple boxes. You can also download the My QuitBuddy app, which is run by the Australian government.

My QuitBuddy



My QuitBuddy

A mobile app that helps you get, and stay, smoke-free and vape-free. It provides helpful tips to overcome cravings and tracking systems to chart your progress.

iCanQuit
iCanQuit helps you quit smoking or vaping with tools that work for you.
iCanQuit.com.au

Pave
A free mobile app to help young people quit vaping.
[Download Pave](#)

Quitline 13 7848
NSW Quitline
Free phone counselling to help you quit smoking or vaping.
[Call 13 7848](#)

Quitline 13 7848
NSW Quitline for Aboriginal people
Yarn about quitting smoking or vaping.
[Call 13 7848](#)

If you need an interpreter, we can arrange one when you call us.

You've got this – and support is only a call, click or tap away.



2. Benefits of quitting smoking or vaping

Quitting at any age is worth it.

When you start to quit, it's normal to have cravings and withdrawal symptoms. These tough days won't last forever. Your body starts to heal as soon as you stop smoking or vaping. Over time, the health risks and serious harms begin to reverse.

Smoking refers to using any tobacco product, including cigarettes, cigars, chewing tobacco, betel nut quid, shisha or waterpipe.

Shisha has nicotine and harmful chemicals, and the water doesn't make it safe. One session can mean breathing in as much smoke as 100 cigarettes.

Vaping refers to using electronic devices (vapes or e-cigarettes) that heat liquid into vapour, which is then inhaled into the lungs.

There are many benefits of quitting smoking and vaping including:

- healthier lungs and easier breathing
- better physical fitness and more energy
- improved sense of smell and taste
- better mood and mental wellbeing

- saving money
- protecting loved ones from second-hand smoke or vapour.

Quitting smoking leads to:

- improved recovery from illness or injury
- better heart health and circulation
- possible improvements in fertility and reproductive health
- reduced risk of serious diseases, including cancer and heart disease
- healthier and clearer skin.

Quitting oral tobacco or nicotine products, such as betel nut quid, chewing tobacco, and nicotine pouches, has similar health benefits to quitting smoking.

Quitting vaping leads to:

- lower risk of pneumonia and other chest infections
- healthier mouth, teeth and gums
- improved ability to think clearly, focus and learn
- improved mental health and wellbeing.



3. Motivations to quit

It's important to know exactly why you want to quit. Being clear about your reasons will help you stay focused and push through the hard times. Everyone's reasons are different. Here are some common ones. **Circle the ones that matter most to you:**



Feel healthier –Your body starts repairing itself as soon as you quit. You'll breathe easier, cough less, and get over colds and flu faster.



Take back control –Nicotine is addictive. Quitting puts you back in control.



Get fitter –Exercise and physical activity become easier, and you'll have more energy.



Save money –Smoking and vaping can cost a lot. Quitting means you will have more money in your pocket. You can calculate your savings on [iCanQuit.com.au/money](https://www.icanquit.com.au/money).



Feel less stressed and improve your mental health –The stress or anxiety you experience may actually be caused by nicotine withdrawal. Nicotine dependence develops quickly with tobacco and vaping products, but within a few weeks of quitting, most people feel calmer and less anxious.



Enjoy more freedom –No more worrying about running out of smokes or planning your day around smoking or vaping.



Look and smell better –Quitting means no more stained teeth or fingers, bad breath, or lingering smells on your clothes and hair.



Heal better if you're unwell –Quitting can help your body recover faster and improve your response to treatment.



Protect the people you care about – Second-hand smoke or vapour can harm others. Quitting also sets a great example for others.



Support other healthy changes –Quitting can help you cut back on alcohol and other drugs.



If you're pregnant or planning a family – Quitting improves fertility for both men and women; and helps protect your baby's health.



Not enjoying it anymore –You might simply be over it, and that's reason enough.

For more reasons to quit and information on the benefits of quitting, visit [iCanQuit.com.au](https://www.icanquit.com.au).



Boost your confidence –Showing that you can quit means you can tackle other challenges.

My reasons to quit:

“244 days smoke free and over \$4000 saved. This is enough motivation to keep strong and resist the cravings. I know that if I have one cigarette I will be back where I started.”

– iCanQuit community member

“I am halfway through day one of no smoking. I've been reading the posts & people who are succeeding on their quit journey & they are all very motivating!”

– iCanQuit community member

4. Getting ready to quit

Quitting smoking or vaping is a big step, but you're not alone. It's normal to feel unsure about where to start. This section will guide you through some helpful first steps.

What is nicotine dependence and withdrawal?

Nicotine is the addictive substance found in tobacco and most vaping products. Nicotine triggers your brain to release dopamine - the chemical that makes you feel good. However, these feelings don't last long because nicotine leaves your body quickly. That's why you might feel the urge to smoke or vape again soon after. Over time, your body needs nicotine just to feel okay. This is called dependence.

If you stop using nicotine, you might feel withdrawal symptoms like:

- headaches
- feeling angry, irritable or upset
- finding it hard to focus
- feeling anxious or low
- being hungrier than usual.

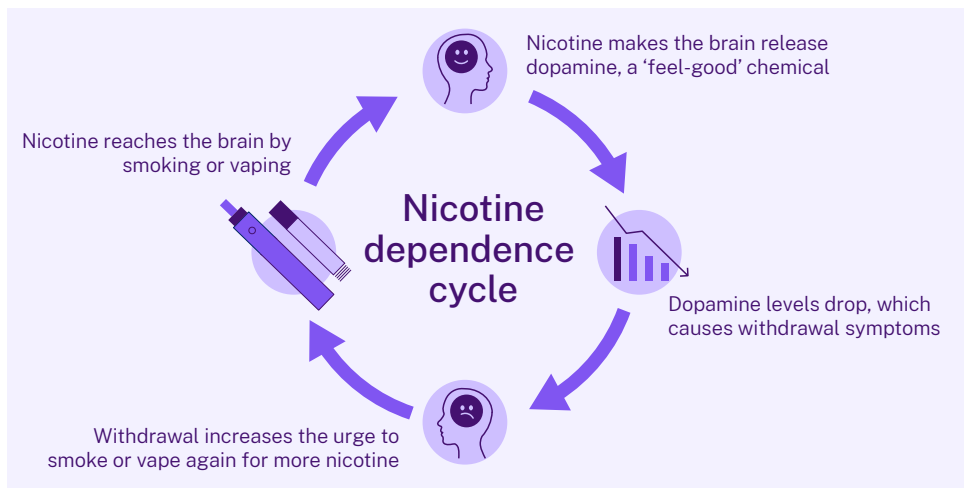
These are all signs of nicotine dependence.

You might be dependent on nicotine if you:

- smoke or vape within 30 minutes of waking up
- smoke more than 10 cigarettes a day or vape often throughout the day
- feel cravings or withdrawal symptoms (like headaches or irritability) when you try to cut back or go too long without it
- vape alone or wake up at night to vape.

If any of this sounds familiar, don't worry. You can still quit. It just means you might need a bit of extra support.

Nicotine replacement therapy (NRT) or quit medications can make quitting easier. Talk to your doctor, pharmacist or call Quitline on 13 7848 for free, personalised advice.



Knowing your triggers: why and when you smoke or vape

Quitting isn't just about stopping smoking or vaping - it's also about understanding and changing the habits and routines connected to them.

Understanding your reasons for smoking or vaping can help when you're planning to quit. The reasons or situations that make you want to smoke or vape are called triggers.

Here are some common reasons people smoke or vape. Tick any that apply to you:

To satisfy nicotine cravings.

As part of a daily routine (e.g. after meals, while driving, or watching TV).

When drinking coffee, tea, or alcohol.

To cope with feelings like stress, boredom, anger, loneliness, or even happiness.

To relax, feel good, or as a way to reward yourself.

When spending time with friends who smoke or vape.

When celebrating an occasion.

Other situations or feelings:

These triggers can be strong but understanding them gives you a chance to take back control. Once you know what leads you to smoke or vape, you can start planning how to handle these moments.

Sometimes you might be able to avoid your triggers and sometimes you can't avoid them. That's why it's important to have a plan. Think ahead about what you'll do or say when you're faced with a trigger and feel the urge to smoke or vape.

Being prepared makes it much easier to stick to your plan and achieve your goals.

For more information on recognising your triggers visit: [iCanQuit.com.au/triggers](https://www.icanquit.com.au/triggers).



"I have been quit for a while - there are triggers on a daily basis. I see each day as a new opportunity to do better/ be creative in avoiding those triggers."

– iCanQuit community member

"Here's how to stay smoke free! Stay focused! Mix up your routine! Watch for unexpected triggers! Stay connected! Celebrate the Milestone!"

– iCanQuit community member

Previous quitting experiences: Reflection

If you've tried to quit before, that's a positive step. Lots of people need a few attempts before they quit for good. Each try teaches you something new about what helps.

Take some time to reflect on your past experiences:

- What caused you to start smoking or vaping again?
- What could you do differently next time?
- What worked, even for a little while?

Use what you've learnt to build a new plan for this quit attempt. Every experience gets you closer to success.

Thinking about your previous quit attempts, write down:

What helped?

What didn't help?



5. What to expect when you quit and how to manage

What happens to your body when you quit

When you stop smoking or vaping, your body needs to get used to not having nicotine. This can take 2–4 weeks (and sometimes longer) to adjust. During this time, you may feel:

- irritated
- restless
- unable to concentrate or complete everyday tasks
- tired from sleeping difficulties.

These are withdrawal symptoms. They can feel strong in the first few days or weeks but will gradually ease over time.

This diagram is based on evidence about the benefits of quitting smoking. Research on the benefits of quitting vaping is still ongoing, but we know that stopping vaping can improve breathing and heart health, and mental health symptoms may also improve.

Using both cigarettes and vapes (dual-use) can make quitting harder and withdrawal symptoms more intense. This is because your body may be more dependent on nicotine. If quitting both at the same time feels too hard, try quitting one product first and get extra support if needed.

Short and long-term benefits

The longer you stay quit the more your body heals and the lower your risk of serious disease. Here are some short-and long-term benefits of stopping smoking:



Cravings and triggers

Quitting smoking or vaping is a huge achievement. Staying quit takes practise, especially when cravings or triggers catch you off guard.

Cravings are often sparked by certain places, routines, or feelings that remind you of when you used to smoke or vape. These are triggers. Being aware of these triggers can help you feel more prepared and in control.



Remember, the toughest days are often at the beginning. Every day you go without smoking or vaping is a step toward a healthier, stronger you.

Try the 4D's to manage cravings and triggers

4D's What to do



Delay

When a craving hits, pause for a few minutes. Urges usually pass quickly and often last no more than 10–15 minutes.



Deep breathe

Take a few slow, deep breaths. This increases oxygen to your brain and helps calm your nervous system.



Drink water

Sip slowly. Drinking water keeps your hands and mouth busy, just like smoking or vaping. Try to stay present and focus on each sip.



Do something

When you feel the urge to smoke or vape, try one of these activities to help distract yourself and take your mind off it:

- go for a walk, stretch, or do some other physical activity
- move your body by cleaning, dancing, or playing a musical instrument
- listen to music or play a game or puzzle
- chew gum or have a healthy snack
- spend time with a pet or chat with someone supportive
- try mindfulness exercises, deep breathing, or imagine a peaceful place
- keep your hands busy with small tasks like gardening, drawing, or crafts
- breathe through a straw for a couple of minutes.

Be kind and gentle with yourself – healing takes time.

Nicotine replacement therapy

Using nicotine replacement therapy (NRT) or quit-smoking medications can also ease cravings and withdrawal.

Stay away from triggers

Make your home and car smoke and vape-free by getting rid of your cigarettes, ash trays, vapes, lighters and any other equipment.

Switch up routines

Changing routines that you usually associate with smoking or vaping can help break the habit. Try these ideas to create new habits:

- start your day with a shower or some light exercise instead of smoking or vaping
- have your coffee somewhere different, use a different mug, or switch to another hot drink
- brush your teeth or go for a walk right after meals
- rearrange your space or keep your hands busy while watching TV
- choose drinks that don't trigger cravings and hold your glass with the hand you usually use for smoking or vaping.

Social settings

Spend time with people who support your decision to quit. Consider asking a friend to quit with you.

Practice ways to say “no”, for example:

- “No thanks, I've quit”
- “I'm a non-smoker”
- “I don't smoke/vape anymore”.

Manage stress in healthy ways

Refer to the section in this book 'Looking after your health and wellbeing while quitting' for more ways to manage stress.

In the boxes below, write down how you would manage your triggers.

Trigger

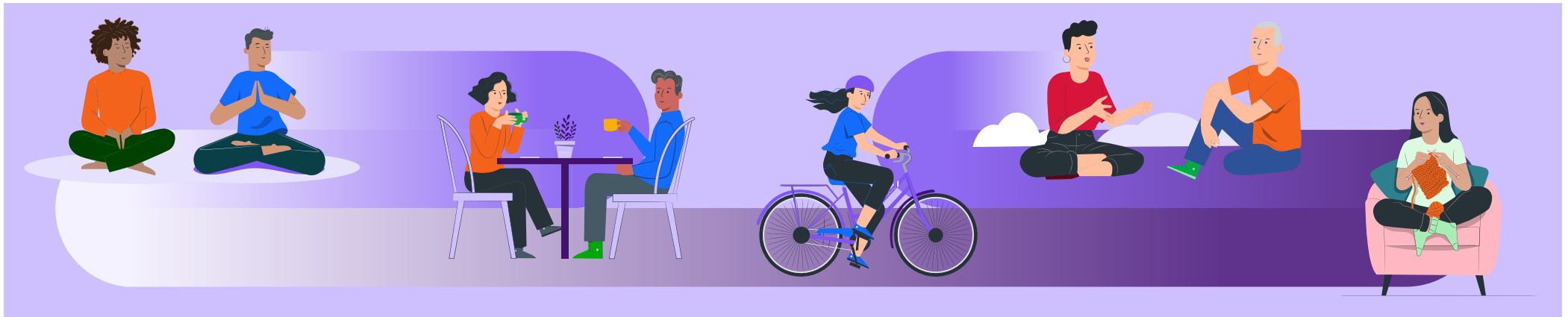
e.g. smoking with morning coffee

Plan to manage trigger

e.g. switch to another hot drink and sit somewhere different to drink it

Was my strategy useful?

e.g. absolutely/partially/not really



ACE strategy

You may find the **ACE strategy** helpful to stay on track when you are trying to quit smoking or vaping.



Avoid risky situations by planning ahead to stay away from people, places, or routines that trigger the urge to smoke or vape.



Cope with cravings and triggers by using healthy strategies like NRT, deep breathing, or distractions to manage cravings.



Escape the situation –if it gets too hard, remove yourself from the situation to protect your quit attempt.

Tip:

Every time you say “no,” you’re building your smoke- and vape-free life. Use the money you save to improve your life. Cravings will usually pass quickly. Keep trying new activities and stick to your quit plan.

If you slip up, don’t get discouraged –it’s not a failure, but a chance to learn.

HALT strategy

Before you smoke or vape, ask yourself, am I:



Hungry?

Eat something or drink water.



Angry?

Take deep breaths or move your body.



Lonely?

Connect with a friend or family.



Tired?

Rest or take a short break.

Taking care of these needs first can help reduce cravings.

For more tips on cravings, triggers and routines, visit [iCanQuit.com.au/cravings/triggers](https://www.icanquit.com.au/cravings/triggers).

“I’m on day 22 & still taking each day as a win. Some days are easier than others, some days I don’t think I’m going to make it but so far I’m winning. This time around I’m trying to be more aware of my triggers & when I can feel I’m getting jumpy I remove myself from the situation & take myself for a quiet walk or log on here & see how you’re all doing...”

– iCanQuit community member



Looking after your health and wellbeing while quitting

Quitting smoking or vaping helps your body begin to heal. It is a time of change, both physically and emotionally, and it is important to take care of your overall health.

Eat well and stay active

It's normal to feel hungrier or snack more after quitting - your body and brain are adjusting. Some small weight gain is common and is much healthier than continuing to smoke or vape.

If you're concerned about your weight, speak with a health professional for support or access the free Get Healthy Service, which provides free phone and online health coaching. Visit gethealthynsw.com.au.

While you're quitting, try to stay active with activities you enjoy and focus on eating nutritious foods.

Tips to manage increased appetite:

- prepare healthy meals and snacks and keep them handy
- choose meals and snacks that keep you full and energised
- drink water and choose low-calorie snacks like carrots
- stay active with walks, dancing, or any movement you enjoy
- plan your meals and allow yourself an occasional treat.

How quitting affects medications

When you quit smoking or vaping, it can change how some medications work in your body. This includes medicines for:

- mental health
- heart conditions
- blood pressure
- diabetes.

Your doctor may need to change the amount of medication you're taking, so it's important to let them know early that you are trying to quit.

Don't adjust or stop your medications on your own. Talk to your doctor before making any changes so you can be properly supported while quitting. If you have any concerns, speak with your doctor or health professional.

Managing stress without smoking or vaping

Feeling emotional or stressed in the early days of quitting is common. You might feel like you've lost a part of your daily routine or a way of coping. But these feelings will pass, and in the long run, most people feel less stressed after quitting.

Here are a few things to try when you're feeling overwhelmed:

- take deep breaths - slowly inhale, hold, and exhale
- go for a short walk or stretch your body
- listen to music, read, or take a warm shower
- call a friend, family member, or Quitline 13 7848
- drink water or chew sugar-free gum to keep your mouth and hands busy
- step outside or take a moment alone
- write down what's causing stress and focus on what you can control.

Be kind to yourself with reminders like "I'm doing my best".

"...It was hard because before i didn't change anything in my everyday activities and all the routine was the same but without my precious cigarette. So...try to do something else, something to keep your mind busy watch movies, do a project, play, do anything to keep you distracted from smoking..."

- iCanQuit community member



Planning to get pregnant

Planning for a child is an exciting time. Quitting smoking or vaping can improve your chances of getting pregnant and support a healthier pregnancy. If you're having fertility treatment, such as IVF, quitting can also improve your chances of success.

Quitting during pregnancy or breastfeeding

If you're pregnant or breastfeeding, quitting smoking or vaping is one of the best things you can do for you and your baby. Quitting helps your baby grow in a healthier environment and supports your own wellbeing.

The earlier you quit, the greater the benefits, but it is never too late to stop. Quitting at any stage of pregnancy helps reduce risks such as:

- miscarriage
- stillbirth
- premature birth
- low birth weight
- other health problems for you and baby.

Nicotine and harmful chemicals from smoking or vaping can also pass into breast milk, so quitting helps protect your baby after birth as well.

Quitting with supports

Supports are available to make quitting easier. Your doctor, midwife, or health professional can talk you through safe options, including nicotine replacement therapy (such as lozenges or gum). These can be used during pregnancy with medical advice. They can also check your carbon monoxide (CO) levels to reassure you that your baby is being protected as you quit.

For extra support, you can call Quitline on 13 7848. Quitline counsellors give free and confidential help to plan your quit attempt, manage cravings, and stay motivated. Aboriginal Quitline counsellors are also available to provide culturally safe support.

For more information on smoking and pregnancy, visit iCanQuit.com.au/pregnancy.

It is best to quit early, but it's never too late to quit.

"31 days smoke-free and found out I'm pregnant. My husband and I [are] so happy. At least I can say my baby is going to be smoke free as well."

– iCanQuit community member

6. Ways to quit

Make a quit plan and get support

There is no 'best way' to quit, but having a plan and support can make a big difference. If you've quit before, you can quit again - use what you learned from your previous experiences to help you this time.

A quit plan helps you:

- stay focused on your reasons for quitting
- prepare for challenging times
- set clear goals.



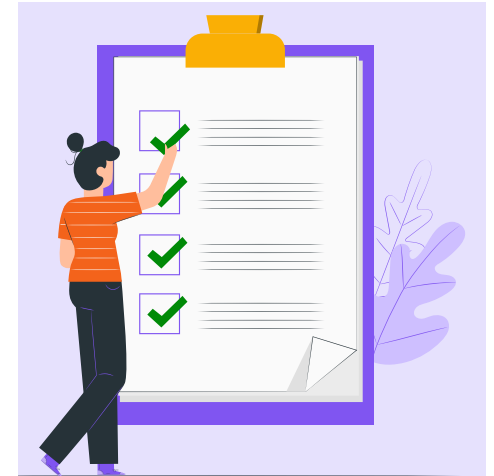
Use the Quit Plan in this booklet or create one at iCanQuit.com.au/quit-plan

No matter which methods you use, having support is important. You can reach out to:

- your doctor
- pharmacist
- other health professional
- friends and family
- Quitline counsellor (call 13 7848).

You can also join the iCanQuit online forum to connect with others who are quitting and:

- share your story
- get tips
- earn badges as you reach goals
- receive motivational texts or emails
- see how much money you're saving.



Quitting suddenly (cold turkey)

Quitting suddenly is common, and many people have successfully quit with this method. Stopping suddenly doesn't mean you can't seek support. You may want to try speaking to a Quitline counsellor and/or use nicotine replacement therapy to help manage any withdrawal symptoms.

For more information on different ways to quit, visit iCanQuit.com.au/ways-to-quit.

If you choose to quit cold turkey, be prepared by:

- knowing your triggers and be prepared with ways to avoid or manage them
- trying to avoid being around others who smoke/vape
- keeping your reasons for quitting handy, so you can remind yourself why you want to be successful and keep motivated
- talking to your doctor about using nicotine replacement therapy or quit medications to help manage cravings.



Cutting down to quit

Cutting down is a step in the right direction. It helps to have a clear plan for when and how much you will cut down, and to set a quit date.

Some helpful tips:

- note how much you currently smoke or vape each day/week
- set small, achievable goals to gradually cut down
- consider nicotine replacement therapy (like gum, patches, or lozenges) to manage cravings
- practise the 4Ds when cravings hit: Delay, Drink water, Deep breathe, Do something else
- make smoking or vaping less convenient by keeping products out of reach
- choose a quit date to work towards as your final goal.

Quit with a friend or family member

Having support can make a big difference. Quitting with someone else can help you both stay motivated.

Just remember that if they slip up, it doesn't mean that you will.

Let your loved ones know how they can support you, such as by not offering you cigarettes or vapes, and by being patient if your mood changes.

If you live with someone who smokes or vapes, ask them to:

- avoid smoking or vaping near you
- smoke or vape outside
- make a quit attempt with you.

You can't control what others do. If they continue to smoke or vape near you, you can still stay on track by leaving the room, saying no, or using other coping strategies.



Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRT)

Nicotine replacement therapy (NRT) are safe and effective products that can help you manage strong withdrawal symptoms and cravings.

NRT works by releasing small amounts of nicotine into the body at a slower rate than smoking or vaping, without all the harmful chemicals.

NRT comes in different forms:

- **patches, which release nicotine slowly through the skin,**
- **oral NRT which release nicotine more quickly and may help with sudden cravings.**

Types of NRT

Nicotine patches: Provides a steady dose of nicotine through the skin over 16 to 24 hours.

Nicotine gum: Chew briefly to release nicotine, then 'park' the gum between the cheek and gum to allow absorption through the mouth lining.

Nicotine lozenges: Dissolve in the mouth over 15–20 minutes, so that nicotine can be absorbed through the mouth lining. Mini lozenges dissolve faster but contain the same doses. Lozenges should not be chewed and swallowed.

Nicotine mouth spray: The fastest acting oral NRT. Spray a mist into the side of the mouth or under the tongue for quick absorption. It should not be swallowed.

NRT works best when combined with behavioural support such as Quitline. Counsellors can help you understand your triggers, find ways to cope, and build healthier habits.

Using combination NRT (a patch plus any oral NRT) can increase your chances of quitting successfully.

Problem-solving NRT issues

NRT should be used for 8 to 12 weeks. If your cravings and withdrawal symptoms are not as intense, it means the NRT is working. After this period, you can slowly reduce or stop it. The risk of becoming dependent on NRT is very low.

If you're still experiencing strong withdrawal symptoms, you may need a higher dose or you may not be using the NRT correctly.

Accessing NRT

NRT is available:

- over the counter at pharmacies and supermarkets
- by prescription from your doctor.

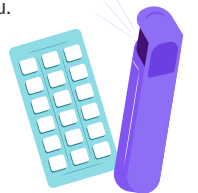


Some people may be able to get subsidised nicotine replacement therapy (NRT) through the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS).

If you are an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander person, you may also be able to get subsidised or free NRT under the Closing the Gap (CTG) PBS co-payment program.

For more information on NRT and how to use it, visit [iCanQuit.com.au/nrt](https://www.icanquit.com.au/nrt).

You can also read the '[How to use Nicotine Therapy](#)' booklet online, or call Quitline to have a copy mailed to you. The booklet explains how to use NRT, possible side effects, and tips for solving common problems.





Prescription medications

Your doctor may prescribe quit-smoking medications such as varenicline or bupropion, to help you quit. These medications reduce cravings and make withdrawal symptoms easier to manage. They are not suitable for everyone, so your doctor will help decide if they are right for you.

“I am on quit attempt number 3! This time I’m using varenicline. I cannot seem to get past the cravings any other way. I am more determined than ever to quit... I’m also living week to week financially so quitting is going to be a huge money saver...”

– iCanQuit community member

Vaping to quit smoking

Vaping is not the best option to quit smoking. It should only be considered if proven methods like counselling, NRT, or quit-smoking medications haven’t worked.

The Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) has not approved any vapes as safe or effective for quitting. Many vapes contain very high levels of nicotine and other harmful chemicals.

The long-term health effects of vaping are still unknown, but we do know it can cause:

- lung damage
- burns
- breathing problems
- nicotine poisoning (vomiting, nausea and diarrhoea)
- damage to the mouth, throat, teeth and gums.

For young people, nicotine can affect the developing brain, causing problems with memory, mood, and increasing stress and anxiety.

If you are thinking about using vaping to quit smoking, talk to your doctor or pharmacist first. If you are under 18, you need to see a doctor to talk about your options and, if suitable, get a prescription for vaping products.

Using both cigarettes and vapes together (dual use) is not recommended. It can make you more dependent on nicotine, cause more health problems, and increase your risk of lung cancer. If quitting both is too hard, try stopping one at a time.

Alternative therapies

Some people try alternative or non-traditional methods to quit smoking or vaping, such as:

- acupuncture
- hypnotherapy
- laser therapy
- herbal products
- the Allen Carr method
- nicotine pouches.

These methods do not have strong evidence to show they work.

Some can also be harmful or illegal:

- Herbal cigarettes still produce harmful smoke and cancer-causing chemicals
- Nicotine pouches are not regulated in Australia and are illegal to sell. They may cause mouth sores, nausea, and stomach problems.
- Herbal remedies and laser therapy can be expensive and may not be safe or effective.

If you’re ready to quit, the safest and most effective options are the ones that are proven to work, including:


- making a quit plan
- nicotine replacement therapy
- prescription medications
- support through counselling from services such as Quitline.

These options are backed by strong evidence and can give you the best chance of quitting for good.

7. Making a quit plan

Write out your quit plan and use it as a reminder when it gets hard.

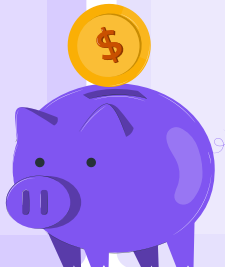
Your quit date:
e.g. "15 December – my birthday!"




I am planning to quit this/these products:




Your quit goals:
e.g. "I'm going to replace my morning smoke with a 10-minute walk"



Your reasons to quit smoking or vaping:
e.g. "I want to quit smoking for my family"



How you will manage cravings and triggers:
e.g. "I'm going to use nicotine gum when I feel stressed or anxious"



Quit methods and supports I'll use:

My mantras and intentions:
e.g. "I plan to manage my triggers"
"I am stronger than my cravings"
"I've gotten through tough things before, I can get through these cravings too"

8. Slip-ups are normal, not a sign you've failed



Slip-ups sometimes happen in the first few weeks because:

- cravings are the strongest
- you're feeling (more) stressed
- social events may be a trigger for you
- people around you smoke and vape.

Remember, every step you take is progress. Be proud of how far you've come.

What to do if you slip up

Pause and think about:

- What made me want to smoke or vape?
- Could I have avoided that situation?
- What could I do differently next time facing the same situation?
- Would more support or medication help?
- Am I using my NRT properly?

Update your Quit Plan if needed, throw out any cigarettes or vapes, and keep going.

Use what you've learned

Every quit attempt teaches you something. Reflect on:

- What worked?
- What didn't?
- What support would help next time?
- Why do I want to quit?

These insights can help you feel more prepared and confident for your next attempt.

For more advice on managing slip-ups, visit [iCanQuit.com.au/slipups](https://www.icanquit.com.au/slipups) or speak to a Quitline counsellor today.

"I slipped up over the weekend, but I am extremely determined to stay smoke free, my motto is never give up on giving up, and I'm now into day 2 of quitting, remembering my reasons for quitting and my motivation. My bank balance is also heaps better, and I find using the NRT really helps as well."

– iCanQuit community member

"Today is my one year smoke free celebration! I'm super proud and happy! I feel better and look somewhat better as well. It was not an easy year, but I found my triggers, most of them, and made changes."

– iCanQuit community member

9. Free support available



iCanQuit

Helps you quit smoking or vaping with tools that work for you. Set up a quit plan, stay motivated with tips and activities, track your progress, earn badges, use games to beat cravings and join an online community that supports you every step of the way.

 [iCanQuit.com.au](https://www.icanquit.com.au)



Pave

A free app to help young people quit vaping. Set a quit date, track your progress, get tips and daily check-ins, do distraction activities, celebrate milestones, and see your savings. Download Pave from the Apple App Store or Google Play.

 [Download Pave](#)

Quitline
137848



NSW Quitline

Free phone counselling to help you quit smoking or vaping. If you need an interpreter, we can arrange one for you when you call us.

Operating hours:

Monday - Friday	8.00am–8.00pm
Saturday	9.00am–5.00pm
Sunday and public holidays	Closed

 [Call 13 7848](#)

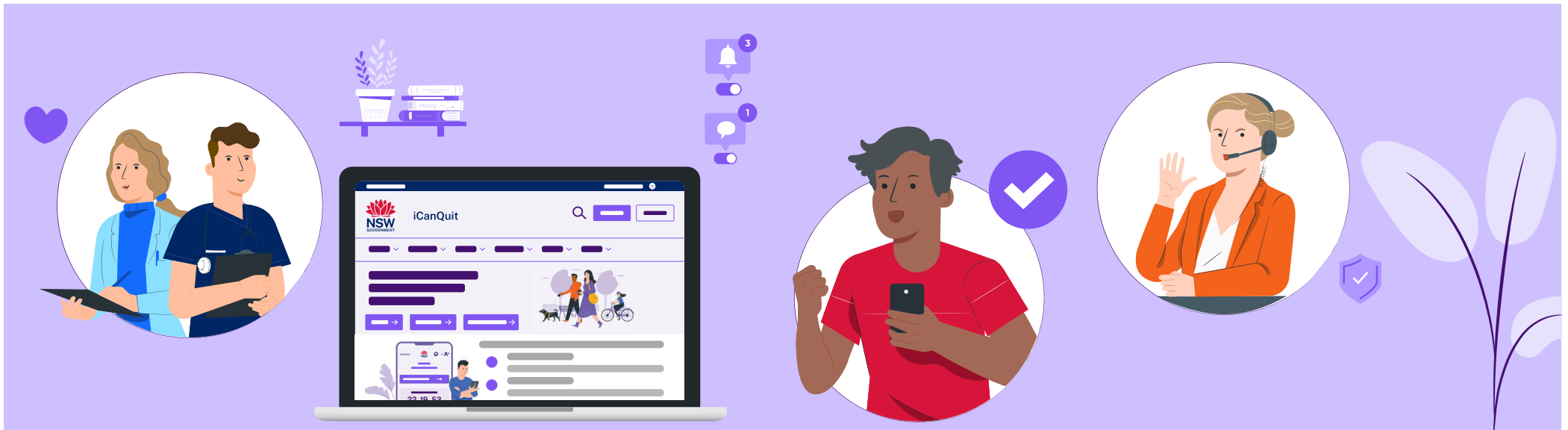
Quitline
137848



NSW Quitline for Aboriginal people

Ask to speak to an Aboriginal counsellor for a yarn about quitting smoking or vaping.

 [Call 13 7848](#)



Talk to your doctor or health professional

Your doctor can support your quit journey by recommending quitting supports, including NRT, low-cost medications through the PBS and a referral to Quitline. It's especially important to seek their advice if you're pregnant, breastfeeding, or have a health condition. They can tailor a quit plan to suit your health needs.

My QuitBuddy



My QuitBuddy

A mobile app that helps you get, and stay, smoke-free and vape-free. It provides helpful tips to overcome cravings and tracking systems to chart your progress. Available to download for free on Apple and Android devices.

A mobile app that helps you get, and stay, smoke-free and vape-free. It provides helpful tips to overcome cravings

Free cancer screening programs

Finding cancer early can save lives. There are free cancer screening programs in NSW that help find cancer early and improve the chance of successful treatment.

Bowel Cancer Screening

If you're aged 45–74, you can get a free bowel cancer test every 2 years.

For more information and instructions on how to do the test, visit cancer.nsw.gov.au/dothetest.

Breast Screening

Breast screening is free for people aged 50–74 and does not need a GP referral. For Aboriginal people, breast screening is recommended and free from ages 40–74, as breast cancer is the most common cancer affecting Aboriginal women.

Call 13 20 50 to book an appointment, or visit book.breastscreen.nsw.gov.au.

Cervical Screening

Women and people with a cervix aged 25–74 who have ever been sexually active should have a cervical screening test every 5 years. You can either take your own sample, or have a doctor or nurse collect it for you.

For more information, visit cancerscreening.gov.au/cervical.

National Lung Cancer Screening Program

Your doctor or healthcare professional will check your age and smoking history to see if you're eligible for the National Lung Cancer Screening Program.

If you choose to take part, you'll be referred for a free low-dose CT scan to look for early signs of lung cancer. Your doctor or healthcare professional will then follow up with your results.

For more information, speak to your doctor, a Quitline counsellor, or visit health.gov.au/our-work/nlcsp/about.

iCanQuit.com.au

 **Quitline 137848**

Want to stop smoking or vaping, but not sure where to start?

Quitline speaks your language



[iCanQuit.com.au](https://www.icanquit.com.au)



NSW Quitline is a free and confidential telephone counselling service that can provide you with information, advice, support and encouragement to help you quit smoking or vaping.



If you need an interpreter, we can arrange one when you call us.

You can also call the Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS) on 131 450 for an interpreter in your language and ask for Quitline.

Call us today

Quitline 137848

