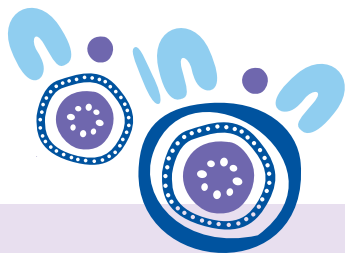




Congratulations on taking the first step on your quit journey!



A smoke-free and vape-free life is a healthier, brighter future, and you're on your way to a stronger, better you!

This Quit Kit, alongside a yarn with a Quitline Counsellor, will give you the support and latest information to help you:



Create a personalised quit plan



Manage your cravings and triggers

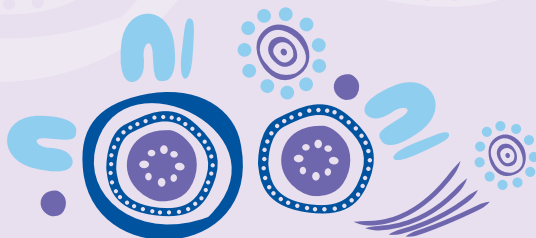


Learn about Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRT) and other available medications



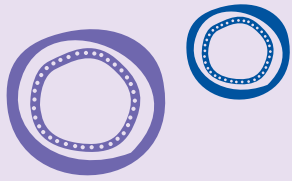
Stay supported every step of the way

Remember, we're here to help! Call **13 7848** and simply ask to speak with an Aboriginal Counsellor. Or visit **iCanQuit.com.au** for more information, tools, and peer support.



iCanQuit





NSW Quitline is available:

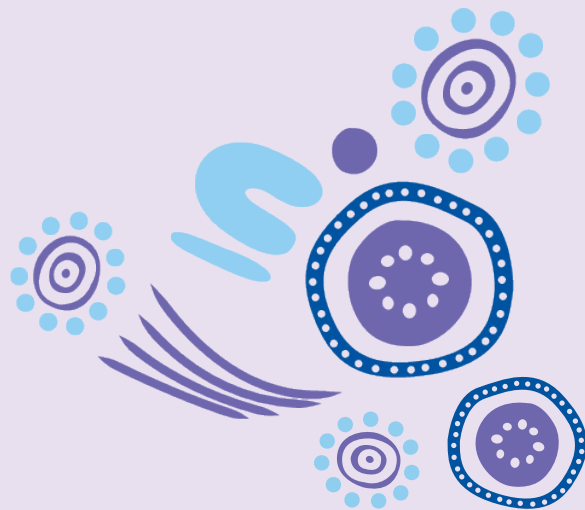
Monday to Friday: 8am to 8pm

Saturday: 9am to 5pm

Our counsellors are trained to support you every step of the way, whether you're cutting back or quitting for good.

We understand that quitting can be challenging and we're here to offer support without judgment. It often takes more than one attempt to succeed, and that's okay. Quitline will work with you to find the best approach that suits your needs, helping you on your journey to a smoke and vape free life.

For more information visit www.icanquit.com.au



Thinking about quitting or cutting down on smoking or vaping?

There are many people who can support you on your journey:

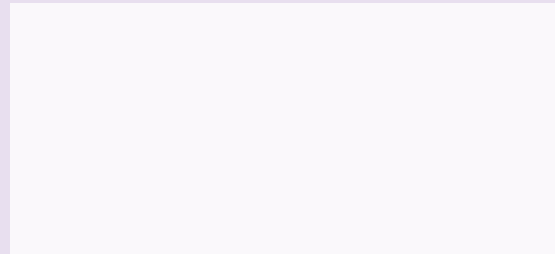
- Aboriginal Quitline Counsellor
- AMS Health Worker
- Doctor or GP
- Nurse
- Tobacco Cessation Worker
- Others who have successfully quit
- Family and friends
- Chemist

You don't have to do it alone – reach out for the help you need.

Quitline is a free, confidential and individually tailored service to assist you in the process of quitting smoking or vaping. Aboriginal counsellors are available to provide you with tips on how to quit and support you on your quit journey.

Quitline 13 7848

Local Contact:



Aboriginal artwork elements designed by Carissa Paglino.

QL-0156-12.24 | (C) 241197



iCanQuit



The infographic features a central circle with a thick blue border and a dotted white inner circle. Seven smaller circles, each with a thick blue border and a dotted white inner circle, are arranged around the center. Dotted lines connect the central circle to each of the surrounding circles. The background is a light purple color with faint, stylized Aboriginal patterns, including concentric circles and wavy lines.

How Quitline can support you

Provide a culturally
safe service, ask to
speak to an Aboriginal
Counsellor

When we call
you, our number
will display
(02) 9138 3421
on your phone

Provide you
with ongoing
counselling
sessions

We will send you
an SMS reminder
to let you know we
are calling

Provide you with
tips to manage
withdrawals and
cravings

Provide you
with information
on Nicotine
Replacement
Therapy

Help you make
a quit plan

Regular
check-ins to
see how you're
doing and offer
support



Decided to quit?

The traditional smoking ceremony cleanses and protects the strength of the spirit. Tobacco smoking and vaping is not part of our culture and harms the body.

Journey Together artwork by Mumbulla Creative

Journey Together recognises the capacity within Aboriginal communities to improve their health and the health of their Mob by embarking on a journey to quitting smoking and vaping.

The weaving pathway symbolises a person's journey towards good health. The circles represent community and health services that provide education and support. The shapes and elements around the central motif are the person's motivators to quit, including family, health, physical fitness, longevity and improved finances.



NSW Ministry of Health

1 Reserve Road
St Leonards NSW 2065
Tel. (02) 9391 9000
TTY. (02) 9391 9900
Website. health.nsw.gov.au

This work is copyright. It may be reproduced in whole or part for study and training purposes subject to the inclusion of an 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 NSW Ministry of Health.

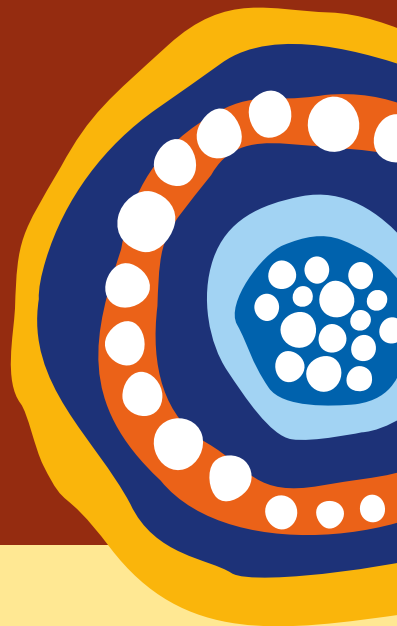
© NSW Ministry of Health.

SHPN (CPH) 250421
ISBN 978-1-74231-133-3 (print)
ISBN 978-1-74231-134-0 (online)

Further copies of this document can be downloaded from the NSW Health website health.nsw.gov.au

June 2025

The best thing you can do for your health is to quit smoking or vaping. Speak with your doctor, Aboriginal health worker, or **call the Quitline on 13 7848.**



Breaking the habit...

Quitting is easy for some people and harder for others. Understanding what to expect after your last cigarette or vape can help. If you've been smoking or vaping for a long time, it likely feels automatic – like a habit built into your daily routine.

Cigarettes

Cigarette smoke contains over 7000 chemicals, many of these chemicals, like arsenic and ammonia, can cause cancer and other illnesses.

There are many health effects of smoking including:

Short term effects

- Bad breath
- Stained teeth
- Fatigue and reduced energy
- Coughing
- Shortness of breath
- Increase in blood pressure and heart rate

Long term effects

- Lung disease
- 16 forms of cancer
- Heart disease
- Stroke
- Respiratory diseases
- Diabetes
- Gum disease
- Losing your sight
- Premature aging
- Poor physical fitness

Vapes

When someone uses a vape, they can inhale over 200 harmful chemicals. Some are toxic chemicals that are linked to cancer, heart disease and lung damage.

Most vapes contain nicotine, which is one of the most addictive drugs in the world. When young people use nicotine, it can lead to changes to brain development, memory and attention problems, increase stress, depression and anxiety.

Did you know?

Vapes can make you more likely to take up cigarette smoking.

Vaping effects

- Coughing and breathing problems
- Headaches
- Dizziness
- Sore throat
- Nausea
- Vomiting
- Nicotine poisoning
- Nicotine dependence
- Nicotine withdrawal symptoms
- Poor physical fitness



How do I quit?

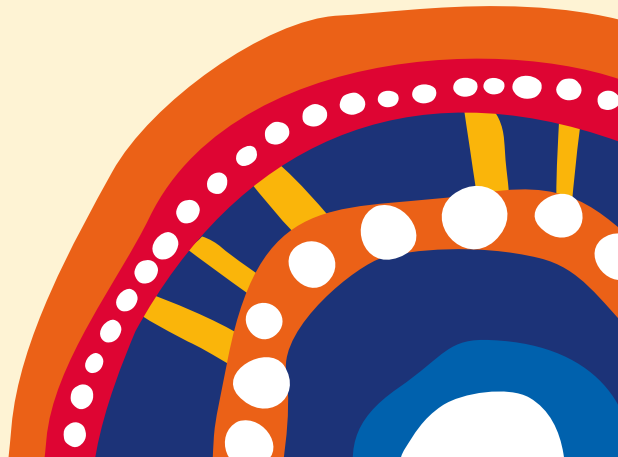
Quitting smoking or vaping can look different for everyone.

Some people choose to stop immediately, while others find it helpful to set a specific 'quit date' to prepare themselves mentally and physically. Using nicotine replacement products (NRT) like patches or gum can make the process smoother by reducing withdrawal symptoms.

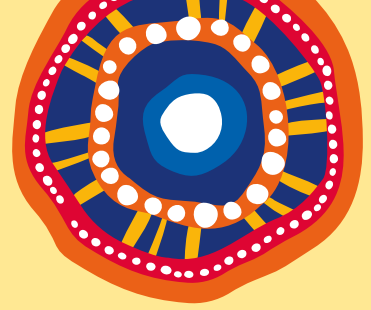
Withdrawal symptoms like mood swings, dizziness, and disrupted sleep are signs that your body is recovering and clearing out harmful toxins from smoking or vaping. To manage these symptoms effectively, it's recommended to use nicotine replacement products consistently for at least 8–12 weeks. For more information, see page 10 or speak with your health worker.

What is nicotine withdrawal?

Nicotine withdrawal is a normal physical and emotional reaction to quitting. Your body has become dependent on nicotine. Without a regular hit, your body will start to experience withdrawal symptoms.



Quit methods



Cutting down

Some people choose to cut down on smoking or vaping before quitting altogether.

If you want to quit but need a bit of time to get there, cutting down can work. If you are planning on using this approach it's important to remember:

- plan a quit date to help you stay on track
- support services like Quitline are available to help you along the way
- talk to your doctor about the use of NRT or quit medications to support you.

Cold Turkey

The real secret to quitting cold turkey is having support. Having people around you can help you stay motivated, feel more in control and get back on track if you slip up. You don't have to do it alone - and you'll be stronger for reaching out.

Cold turkey means trying to quit without using any quit-related products. This is a common method people may try.



What to expect when you quit



Cravings

Cravings are one of the most common challenges people face when quitting smoking or vaping. These intense urges are caused by your body's dependence on nicotine, a highly addictive substance.

Over time, your brain becomes accustomed to regular nicotine doses and when these are reduced or stopped, it triggers cravings as your body adjusts to functioning without it.

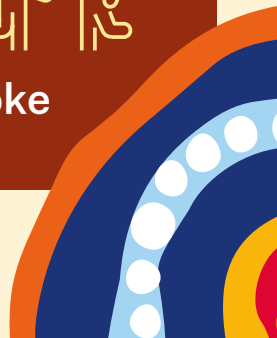
Cravings can feel overwhelming, but they usually peak in the first week after quitting and then gradually become less frequent and intense over time.

They can be triggered by physical withdrawal, habits, routines (like having a smoke with coffee), or emotional factors such as stress or boredom.

It's important to remember that cravings are temporary and usually last only a few minutes. Staying prepared with strategies like deep breathing, staying active or distracting yourself can help you manage cravings and stay on track.



Spend time with people who don't smoke or vape until you feel more in control



Challenges of quitting



“I’m fine until others smoke or vape around me”

It’s normal to feel tempted when others smoke or vape near you. Try avoiding situations where you know others will be smoking or vaping for a few weeks. Also, ask your friends and family to support you by not using either around you.

“I’ve tried to quit before and it didn’t work”

Every quit attempt teaches you something. Think about what helped last time and what didn’t. Quitting is a journey – many people try multiple times before they stop for good. You can learn from the past and try a different approach this time.

“I just don’t have the willpower”

Willpower grows with practice. Focus on why you want to quit – your health, family, or saving money. You’re not alone – there’s plenty of support available to help you succeed.

“I want to quit, but I feel sick and moody”

Nicotine withdrawal can make you feel irritable, restless, or even unwell. These symptoms are temporary – they are signs that your body is healing.

“I’m worried about gaining weight”

A small weight gain is much healthier than smoking or vaping. Stay active with things you enjoy and focus on eating healthy. If you’re concerned, a health professional can help you manage your weight.

Recovery symptoms

Nicotine withdrawal symptoms are normal when quitting smoking or vaping.

Here's some practical tips to manage some common symptoms:

Irritability, anxiety, and mood swings



Tips to manage

- **Mindfulness and relaxation:** Try meditation, deep breathing, or yoga to calm your mind
- **Physical activity:** Even a short walk can help reduce stress and boost your mood
- **Have a yarn:** Share how you're feeling with friends, family, or a support person such as a Quitline counsellor

Difficulty concentrating



Tips to manage

- **Break tasks down:** Focus on one small task at a time
- **Take regular breaks:** Step away from tasks when you feel overwhelmed
- **Stay hydrated and eat well:** Keeping your body nourished helps with mental clarity

Increased appetite and weight gain



Tips to manage

- **Healthy snacks:** Keep fruits, veggies, and nuts on hand to avoid unhealthy choices
- **Stay active:** Regular exercise helps manage weight and distracts from cravings
- **Drink water:** Sometimes thirst is mistaken for hunger

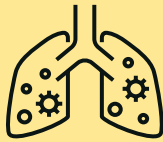
Difficulty sleeping



Tips to manage

- **Set a routine:** Go to bed and wake up at the same time daily
- **Limit caffeine and screens:** Reduce caffeine intake and avoid screens before bed
- **Relax before bed:** Try reading, gentle stretching, or listening to calming music

Coughing and respiratory changes



Tips to manage

- **Stay hydrated:** Water helps loosen mucus and ease coughing
- **Use a humidifier:** Keeps your airways moist and reduces irritation
- **Gentle exercise:** Activities like walking can help clear your lungs

Remember: These symptoms are temporary. They usually peak within the first week and gradually fade over time. If symptoms feel unmanageable, reach out to a healthcare provider for extra support.

General tips for all symptoms

- **Stay connected:** Lean on friends, family, or support groups for encouragement
- **Celebrate small wins:** Recognise each day you stay smoke and vape-free as a success
- **Consider nicotine replacement therapy (NRT):** Products like patches, gum, or lozenges can help ease symptoms

Headaches or dizziness



Tips to manage

- **Hydrate:** Drink plenty of water throughout the day
- **Rest:** Take breaks and give your body time to adjust
- **Over-the-counter pain relief:** Use medication like paracetamol, if necessary, but consult a doctor if headaches persist

Nicotine replacement therapy (NRT)

NRT is available to help people quit by reducing withdrawal symptoms and nicotine cravings.

NRT works by providing a controlled dose of nicotine without the harmful chemicals found in cigarettes or vapes, making it a safer option to support quitting. If you are pregnant you should speak to a health professional before using NRT.

Types of NRT

1. Nicotine patches

- Provide a steady dose of nicotine through the skin over 16 or 24 hours
- Suitable for people with a high nicotine dependence



2. Nicotine gum

- Releases nicotine as you chew, helping with cravings and oral habits
- Available in different strengths to suit varying levels of nicotine dependence



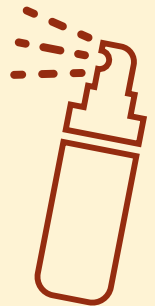
3. Nicotine lozenges

- Dissolve slowly in the mouth, releasing nicotine to curb cravings
- Ideal for people who prefer a discreet option



4. Nicotine mouth spray

- Delivers quick relief by spraying nicotine into the mouth, absorbed through the lining
- Effective for sudden, intense cravings



Combination therapy

Using more than one type of NRT (e.g. a patch for long-acting relief and gum or lozenges for intense cravings) can increase the chances of successfully quitting.

NRT is most effective when combined with behavioural support, such as counselling, which can help you identify triggers, develop coping strategies and build healthier habits.

Accessing NRT

- NRT is available over the counter at pharmacies and supermarkets, as well as by prescription from a doctor
- Some people may qualify for subsidised NRT products through the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS)

NRT is a proven tool that can significantly improve your chances of quitting successfully

Access to quit medications

There are several medications available to help people quit smoking that can be prescribed by a doctor.

A doctor can help determine the most appropriate medication based on your individual needs and prescribe them for you.

Quit medications are available through Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme for eligible patients, making them more affordable.

The Closing the Gap (CTG) PBS co-payment allows for eligible Aboriginal Australians to get low-cost or free medicines.

Support and Advice

Quitline for Aboriginal people



Quitline is a free, confidential and individually tailored service to assist you in the process of quitting smoking or vaping. Aboriginal counsellors are available to provide you with advice on using NRT, quitting strategies and support you on your quit journey. Call the Quitline on 13 7848 and ask to speak to an Aboriginal counsellor.



iCanQuit



iCanQuit is a free website that supports people to quit smoking and/or vaping. It offers personalised quit plans, progress tracking, helpful tips, and a community forum to connect with others. Visit iCanQuit.com.au to get started on your quit journey today.

Pave



Pave is an app that helps young people quit vaping. Pave provides helpful tips, motivations, and tracking tools-including a daily check-in. It offers distractions for cravings, as well as activities and information to help users navigate common barriers to quitting. Pave is available to download for free, on Apple and Android devices.

My QuitBuddy



My QuitBuddy is an 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. My QuitBuddy gives you the facts you need to understand the impacts smoking and vaping have on your health. My QuitBuddy is available to download for free, on Apple and Android devices.

How your body heals

Once you've quit your body can make an amazing recovery

Quitting at any age doesn't just increase your years of life –it also improves quality of life.

Time since quitting	Improvements to your health
Within 20 minutes	Your body begins the recovery process. Your heart rate drops.
4 hours	The nicotine in your blood is halved.
12 hours	The carbon monoxide in your expired air decreases and the oxygen increases
1–2 days	Nicotine by-products are removed from your blood.
2–3 days	Taste buds recover, and your ability to taste and smell improves.
2–12 weeks	Your heart attack risk begins to drop. Circulation improves. Exercise is easier. Lung function improves.
Within 3 months	Coughing, nasal congestion and shortness of breath decrease.
1 year	Your added risk of heart disease is reduced by half compared to a smoker
5 years	Your risk of cancer of the mouth and throat is halved, and your risk of stroke is dramatically reduced.
10 years	Your risk of lung cancer falls to about half that of a smoker and your risk of other cancers decreases.
15 years	Your risk of heart disease and risk of death fall to about the same as someone who has never smoked.



Your local contact person is