

Tips to lower your risk when using nicotine



Nicotine is addictive. How addicted you become makes it more difficult for you to stop. The nicotine products you use and the way you use them also make a difference. Cigarettes are the most addictive while Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRT) is the least. Avoid health risks by not using nicotine. If you do decide to use nicotine, we recommend that you try to quit or follow the tips below to help lower the risks to your health. You can also speak with a health care provider about your options or visit OttawaPublicHealth.ca/TobaccoAndVaping for more resources and services available.

Cut back on your nicotine use

Limit the number of times you use any nicotine products. Try to use less than daily. If using daily, try not to use more than once every few hours and try to wait longer in between uses.



Know your cravings

Cravings happen – but they will pass! Try things like taking a walk, chewing sugar-free gum or doing breathing exercises to manage your cravings. Try different things until you find what works best for you! If you are vaping, choose e-cigarette cartridges with less nicotine. Choose products that have lower levels of nicotine. Products with more nicotine increase your risk of addiction.



Avoid products that burn or contain tobacco

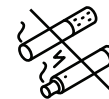
Using any type of commercial tobacco product is harmful. Heated tobacco products (sometimes called heat-not-burn), will lower your exposure to some chemicals (i.e., carbon monoxide). To further reduce your risk, you can



switch to products that don't have tobacco, like Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRT) or e-cigarettes.

Avoid "dual use"

Using both commercial tobacco and e-cigarettes, i.e. "dual use", increases your exposure to harmful chemicals. Vaping may be less harmful than cigarettes, but less harmful doesn't mean free of harm or safe! Most vaping products contain nicotine. If you are going to use nicotine, switch completely from cigarettes to e-cigarettes (with less nicotine) to reduce your exposure and increase your chances of staying cigarette-free.



Avoid using vaping products from illegal or unregulated sources and do not make changes to the product

If you are vaping, use vaping devices that have been authorized for sale in Canada. Do not buy or use products from illegal or unregulated sources. These products are not guaranteed to product safety controls or oversights. Do not change vaping products or add any substances that are not intended by the manufacturer. This can result in serious lung damage. For electronic devices, follow the manufacturer instructions for use and battery charging.



Use Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRT) to help you stop using other nicotine products

NRT products are the safest way to use nicotine. NRT can help you manage your nicotine cravings while you are trying to quit other nicotine products. NRT products include the patch, gum, lozenge, oral mist and inhaler. These are not associated with the negative health effects such as cancers, lung or heart disease, which are caused by cigarettes and other forms of commercial tobacco.



Where can I get help?

If you or a friend need help reducing or quitting, talk to someone you trust. This could be a family member, teacher, coach or guidance/addictions counsellor. If you are not ready to talk to someone you know, are experiencing vaping related symptoms or are concerned about your health, contact your health care provider or visit OttawaPublicHealth.ca/TobaccoAndVaping for more services and resources available.



	Cigarettes	Waterpipe	Smokeless Tobacco	Heat-not-burn (HNB)	E-cigarettes/vaping	Nicotine Replacement Therapy
How it enters the body	Smoke	Smoke	Chew or snuff	Aerosol	Aerosol	Mouth or skin
What's in it?						
Tobacco	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No
Nicotine	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Does it increase risk or risk factors for...?						
Addiction	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No*
Respiratory illness	Yes	Yes	No	???	Yes	No
Cancer	Yes	Yes	Yes	???	???	No
Cardiovascular disease	Yes	Yes	???	???	Yes	No
Reproductive health	Yes	Yes	???	???	???	???**

??? = not enough evidence

* NRT patches are not addictive. However, some patients might experience symptoms of addiction to short acting NRT.

** Safer than smoking and use under the guidance of a healthcare professional.

For more information



Adapted from the Lower Risk Nicotine Use Guidelines, copyright 2020 by the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health, 2020.
<https://www.nicotinedependenceclinic.com/en/lower-risk-nicotine-user-guidelin-es>