

VAPING - STRESS AND ANXIETY

WHY DO YOUNG PEOPLE VAPE?

Young people give many reasons for why they vape. This includes attractive packaging, toy-like devices, and fruity flavours. Some young people also vape to deal with stress and anxiety.

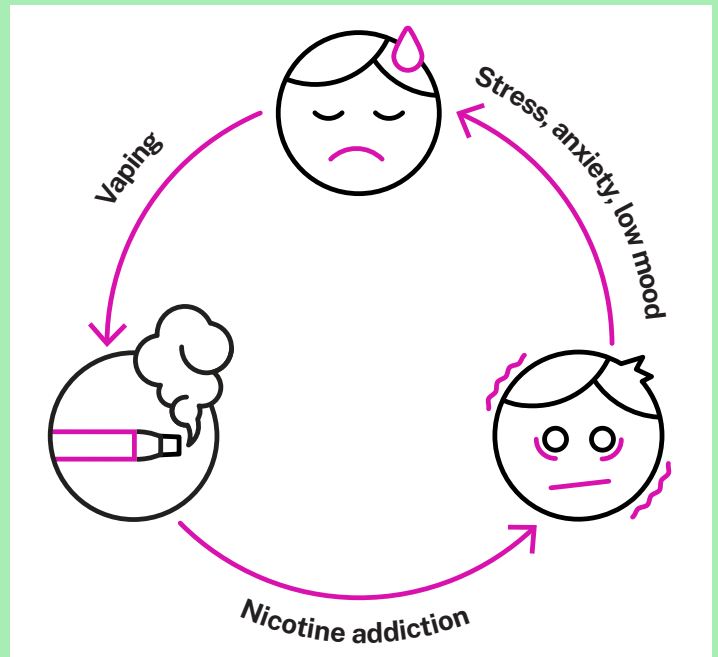
But nicotine addiction (caused by vaping) and the cravings that go with it can be stressful too. Stress and anxiety can trigger vape cravings and make it harder for you to quit for good.

Studies have shown, for young people regular nicotine consumption can cause changes to brain development, impaired attention, learning and memory, and may worsen stress, depression and anxiety. This can create a cycle of stress and further nicotine addiction.

COPING WITH STRESS AND ANXIETY IF YOU VAPE

You can manage the feelings of stress and anxiety without vaping. Here are some tips on ways you can look after your mental health:

- Be aware of how you're feeling and what your mood is like.
- Keep track of your mood, how you're feeling and seek support if you're worried
- Keep a diary of when, where, and who you vape with to help you understand your patterns of vaping and "triggers".
- Move your body and keep active to help reduce stress and anxiety.



HEALTHIER WAYS TO COPE WITH STRESS AND ANXIETY INSTEAD OF VAPING

- **Get active.** When you exercise, your brain releases similar feel-good chemicals to nicotine.
- **Stay busy and plan your day.** Create a schedule or stick to a daily routine.
- **Have fun.** Find ways to incorporate fun activities into your life, and make sure to do something you enjoy every day.
- **Talk** Chat with supportive friends and loved ones.
- **Be positive.** Acknowledge that there will be bad days, but it won't always be like this.
- **Be present.** Focus on what you can control and stay in the moment. Don't worry or stress about things that might not happen.
- **Decaffeinate.** Caffeine can make you feel tense, jittery and stressed. This can make quitting harder, so consider reducing caffeine. This includes coffee, tea, caffeinated soft drinks and energy drinks.
- **Stop and breathe.** Interrupting the anxious feeling with conscious breathing can help you calm down and think clearly.



If you're worried about stress or your mental health, it is really important to talk to someone like a trusted friend, parent/carer, other adult, or health professional like your GP.



Get the facts about vaping at health.nsw.gov.au/vaping

If you think you or a friend might be addicted to vaping, there is help available. See your GP, youth health service, or other health services for help with quitting vaping.

The Pave quit vaping app can help keep you on track with your quit attempt.

Learn more and download the app at www.cancer.nsw.gov.au/pave.

You can also call [Quitline](https://www.quitline.nsw.gov.au) on 13 7848.

