



  
**mind**  
matters

*THE BODY'S RESPONSE TO*  
**NICOTINE**

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*Hi there! Mind Matters is a series that explores the ways that different drugs affect your brain, body, and life. In this issue, we are going to talk about tobacco and nicotine.*



## What is nicotine?

Tobacco is a leafy plant grown all around the world. Tobacco is used by so many people because it contains a powerful drug called nicotine. **Nicotine is very addictive.**



## How do people use tobacco and nicotine?

People can **smoke, sniff, chew, or inhale** the vapors of tobacco and nicotine products.

### SOME PRODUCTS THAT YOU SMOKE OR INHALE:



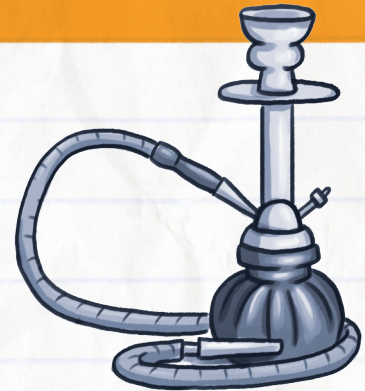
**CIGARETTES**



**CIGARS**



**VAPING DEVICES**



**HOOKAHS**

### SMOKELESS PRODUCTS:



**CHEWING  
TOBACCO**



**SNUFF**  
*Ground tobacco that can be sniffed  
or put between your cheek and gums*



**DIP**  
*Wet snuff that is chewed*



**SNUS**  
*Small pouch of wet snuff*



## How does nicotine work?

Nicotine is absorbed into your bloodstream and goes to your adrenal glands just above your kidneys. The glands release adrenaline which **increases your blood pressure, breathing, and heart rate**. Adrenaline also gives you a lot of good feelings all at once.

**Just being around people who are smoking can be dangerous.**

Breathing other people's smoke can lead to lung cancer and heart disease.

## What are other health effects?

While nicotine is addictive, most of the health effects come from other tobacco chemicals. Tobacco use harms every organ in your body. Smoking tobacco products can cause lung, mouth, stomach, kidney, and bladder cancers. It can also cause lung problems, like coughing, and lead to heart disease, eye problems, and yellow teeth.

**Smokeless tobacco products are dangerous, too.** They can cause oral cancer and heart and gum disease.



Eyes



Mouth



Heart



Stomach



Bladder



Kidney

## How do you become addicted to nicotine?

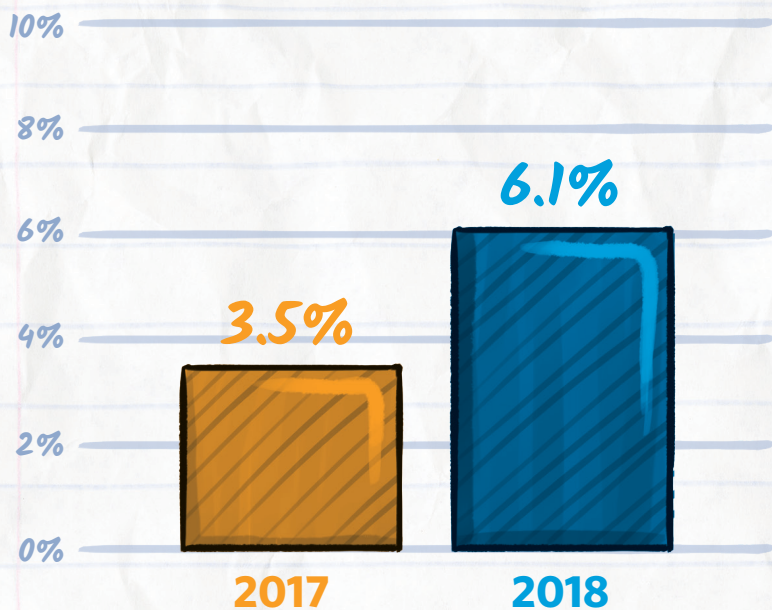
Over time, the nicotine in tobacco can change the way your brain works. If you stop using it, your body can get confused and you can start to feel really sick. This makes it hard to stop using these products even when you know it's bad for you. This is called addiction.

**It can be very hard to stop smoking, but there are some medications that can help.**





## 8TH GRADERS WHO VAPED IN THE PAST MONTH



**Very few 8th graders smoke cigarettes, but many are now vaping.\***

In 2018, just 2.2% of 8th graders used cigarettes in the past month and less than 1% smoked daily. But 6.1% vaped nicotine in the past month, which is way more than in 2017 (3.5%).

### What are vaping devices?

You might have heard people talking about vape pens, vapes, or e-cigarettes (e-cigs). These are names for battery-operated devices that people use to inhale nicotine, flavoring, or other chemicals.

**They can look like cigarettes, pipes, pens, or USB memory sticks.**

### How do vaping devices work?

Puffing on a vape pen or e-cig heats up the device, which turns the liquid in the device into smoke, or vapor. The person then inhales the vapor and the flavor or nicotine goes into their body.



### Can vaping devices help you stop smoking?

Some people think that vaping can help you stop smoking. But actually, **there is not enough science to prove this.** In fact, some research shows that non-smoking preteens and teens who vape nicotine might go on to use other tobacco products like cigarettes.





*What if someone I know needs help?*

**If you think a friend or family member has a problem with tobacco or drugs, talk to an adult you trust — like a parent, coach, or teacher — right away. Remember, treatment is available and people can get better.**

**For more information, go to [teens.drugabuse.gov](https://teens.drugabuse.gov).**



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