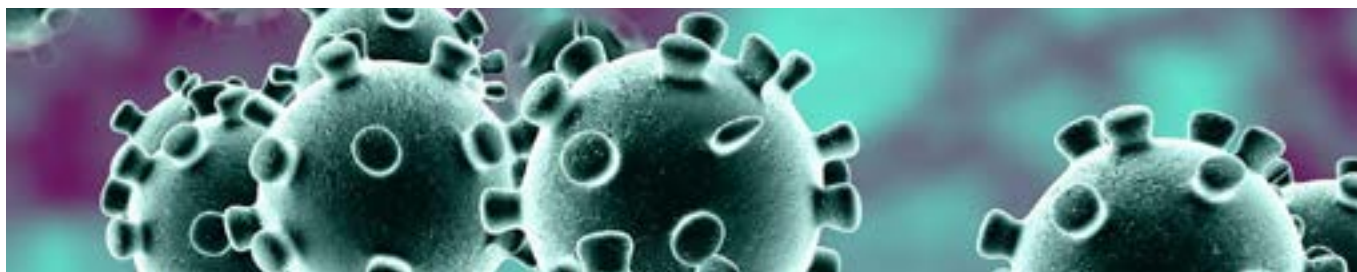


# The facts on vaping and COVID-19

There is no evidence that vaping increases the risk or the severity of COVID-19 in vapers or bystanders despite claims to the contrary by anti-vaping activists



## The risk from passive vaping

Vaping is no more likely to spread COVID-19 than normal breathing, unless the vaper coughs or sneezes as well. COVID-19 is primarily transmitted by coughing or sneezing. Large droplets of saliva containing coronavirus are expelled at high speed into the air, travel over 2 metres and persist in the air for a relatively long time.

However, vaping aerosol consists of very small liquid particles of propylene glycol, vegetable glycerine and very low doses of chemicals. These are released at low speeds with the droplets dispersing quickly. Vapour is released even more slowly from low-powered devices.

There is also some evidence that propylene glycol has anti-viral properties in aerosol form.

## The risk for vapers

Most vapers are former smokers and may have underlying lung damage from years of smoking. As a result, you may be more likely to get lung infections if you contract COVID-19. However, the underlying lung damage is not due to vaping.

Vaping would be expected to reduce your risk of contracting COVID-19 compared to smoking and is likely to reduce the severity of infection as well. However, there is no evidence to confirm this so far.

Any harm to the lungs from vaping is certain to be considerably less than smoking. Most studies show improvements in lung health after switching to vaping, for example better lung function, improved asthma and COPD ('emphysema') and reduced risk of pneumonia.

However, vaping is not risk-free. Laboratory studies do show signs of reduced lung immunity, inflammation and other changes, although it is unclear if this leads to harm in vapers.

## Recommendations

- Quit smoking if you can. If you can't quit, switching to vaping will improve your health and finances
- Observe the usual rules for reducing the spread of COVID-19 such as testing, social distancing, regular handwashing, coughing into your elbow or a tissue, avoiding touching your face and isolation if infected
- Be discreet and avoid large clouds in public. Low-powered vaping devices are preferred in this setting
- Avoid sharing vaping devices, cigarettes or cannabis

For further information and references visit the [blog on the ATHRA website](#)