

**SMOKING, VAPING, AND  
COVID-19:  
ABOUT THE CONNECTION AND  
HOW TO QUIT**

Information from: Massachusetts General Hospital

# ABOUT THIS BOOKLET

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Smoking and vaping have harmful effects on the body, including making it harder for the body to fight infections. This includes serious infections like COVID-19 (also called coronavirus). Learn how smoking and vaping can put your body at a higher risk of catching COVID-19 and how to quit smoking and vaping to protect yourself and others.

# COULD SMOKING AND VAPING MAKE COVID-19 INFECTIONS WORSE?

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If a person who smokes catches COVID-19, they are more than **twice as likely to develop a severe case of COVID-19 than those with no smoking history.**

This means if a person smokes and catches COVID-19, they are more likely to be admitted to the **Intensive Care Unit (ICU)**, **placed on a ventilator** (breathing machine) **or die from the illness.** Menthol and other flavorings in tobacco products (including e-cigarettes) can also make lung infections worse.

People who smoke or vape also have a higher risk of developing **chronic obstructive pulmonary disease** (COPD, a long-term lung disease that affects how well air flows through the lungs). COPD could make COVID-19 infections worse.

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# HOW DO SMOKING AND VAPING WEAKEN THE BODY'S DEFENSES AGAINST DISEASE?



# SMOKING AND VAPING WEAKEN THE BODY'S NATURAL DEFENSES AGAINST DISEASE IN A FEW WAYS:

Tobacco use increases levels of angiotensin-converting enzyme 2 (ACE2).

ACE2 is an enzyme that helps the COVID-19 virus attach to cells in the lung once it enters the body.

Smoking and vaping damage the cilia.

Cilia are hair-like structures that line the lungs to help move air throughout the lungs. This makes it easier for the COVID-19 virus to enter the lungs.

Smoking and vaping damage neutrophils and macrophages.

Neutrophils and macrophages are certain types of white blood cells that help fight infections. This makes it harder for the body to fight viral infections.



**COULD SMOKING AND  
VAPING INCREASE THE  
SPREAD OF COVID-19?**

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# YES

## SMOKING AND VAPING COULD INCREASE THE SPREAD OF COVID-19 IN TWO WAYS:

1

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If a person who smokes or vapes has COVID-19, but does not show symptoms, they are more likely to spread the COVID-19 virus through coughing. People who smoke might also confuse a “smoker’s cough” with a cough caused by COVID-19.

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Smoking and vaping involve hand-to-mouth contact. This makes it easier for the COVID-19 virus to spread from their mouth to their hands and onto other surfaces.

# TOOLS TO QUIT:

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HOW CAN I QUIT SMOKING/VAPING AND PROTECT MYSELF FROM COVID-19?



## Use a nicotine patch and gum.

- By using a patch and gum together, you are 4 times more likely to quit successfully.

## Pair quit smoking medications with expert coaching and support.



- **All Ages:** Text the word "QUIT" (7848) to IQUIT (47848) for free

- **Teens and Young Adults:** To enroll in This is Quitting, Indiana text INDIANA to 88709.



# THANK YOU FOR YOUR INTEREST!

**For any questions, and more  
information, visit our website:**

<https://indianactsi.org/community/initiatives/indiana-joint-asthma-coalition/>

This project was funded, in part, by grant(s) N01EH001382 and/or NB01OT009281 from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and with support from the Indiana Clinical and Translational Sciences Institute funded, in part, by award number UL1TR002529 from the National Institutes of Health, National Center for Advancing Translational Sciences, Clinical and Translational Sciences Award.



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