

KNOW WHAT'S UP INTOXICATION AND RISK



In the spotlight: **Smoking** (vapes, shishas, tobacco, vaporisers)

<p>Substance</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nicotine is the main active compound of the tobacco plant, and it is a neurotoxin. Burning tobacco releases a number of toxic substances (such as carbon monoxide, formaldehyde, and acetaldehyde). Tobacco smoke contains about 4,800 known substances, of which 90+ are considered to be carcinogenic or mutagenic. Ingredients of the vape liquid: propylene glycol, vegetable glycerine, flavourings, optional nicotine, water, possible contaminants (metals, nitrosamines, tobacco alkaloids) The base material of shisha tobacco is called molasses: It consists of a mixture of tobacco leaves, sugar cane additives, and flavourings. The tobacco can be replaced by herbal mixtures, shiazu stones, gels or liquids.
<p>Method of consumption & Effects</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Burning tobacco in cigarettes, cigars, pipes, and inhaling the smoke Heating and vaporising a liquid in e-cigarettes, tobacco heaters, vapes and inhaling the smoke; in this case, the vapour is usually inhaled more deeply than when smoking cigarettes. Shisha: the smoke being produced is passed through water and inhaled through the tube. Nicotine has two fundamentally different effects: stimulating and calming; other effects include: release of dopamine, adrenaline and serotonin, increased heart rate, increased blood pressure, reduced sensation of hunger, constriction of skin vessels, reduced blood circulation in the skin, reduction in skin temperature, subjective increase in alertness, concentration and memory, as well as reduction in stress, anxiety, insecurity, nervousness, and fatigue
<p>Mixed consumption</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Both alcohol and tobacco consumption carry the risk of addiction; mixed consumption increases the risk to health and the risk of addiction. The organs of the upper digestive tract are particularly affected, and the risk of cancer also increases.
<p>Legal appraisal</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Under the Youth Protection Act, tobacco products are not allowed to be sold to minors in public or consumed by them. This applies to nicotine-containing and nicotine-free products, electronic cigarettes, and shishas. These products may also not be sold to minors via vending machines or mail order. Advertising tobacco is subject to broad bans. The Federal Non-Smoker Protection Act bans smoking and the use of e-cigarettes and tobacco heaters in public buildings and public transport.

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<p>Acute risks & Long-term effects</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When smoking and vaping, large amounts of toxins are absorbed through the lungs and distributed throughout the body via the bloodstream, causing organ damage. When vaping, the aerosol is inhaled more deeply so that more harmful substances are absorbed into the body. • Respiratory tract irritation, respiratory diseases, asthma, cardiovascular diseases, cancer, increased risk of type 2 diabetes, pulmonary diseases (e.g. EVALI), damage to dental health, accelerated skin ageing, contact allergies • Mental and physical dependency • Passive smoking, too, poses a significant health risk to non-smokers and increases the risk of respiratory issues, reduced lung function, lower respiratory tract infections, asthma, and middle ear infections.
<p>Prevention & Recommendations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The earlier adolescents start smoking or vaping or consuming other nicotine products, the greater their risk of addiction. • Information and support services (e.g. rauchfrei-info.de) • Test – what do you know about nicotine? https://www.drugcom.de/wissenstests/nikotin • It is reasonable for caregivers to take a clear stance and engage in open, non-judgmental dialogue with young people to help them develop their own critical thinking skills.
<p>Statistics</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In Germany, 20,1% of all people from 18 years of age smoke. • Among young people, the proportion of 12- to 17-year-olds who smoke is 6.8%. • 26,3% of all young adults aged 18 to 25 smoke. • A study suggests that about 19% of all cancers in Germany are caused by smoking. • E-cigarette consumption in 2025 is between 2.3 and 4.0%. • E-cigarette consumption among young people rose from 1.5% in 2024 to 3.9% in 2025.

Sources

<https://www.rauchfrei-info.de/rund-um-tabak> (accessed on: 25-09-2025)

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