

## Facts about Vaping

### *What is THC Vaping?*

There is a trend amongst young people to add THC oil to vaping liquid. THC oil is a sticky thick, yellowy brown liquid which comes from the cannabis plant. Adding any type of drug to a vape is extremely dangerous and can cause profound mental health problems.



### *What are the dangers of THC Vaping?*

There has been an increase in young people experimenting with THC vaping. THC is the chemical that gives the 'high' effect in cannabis. The latest reports show that this has led to some young people overdosing on THC, causing them to become unwell and needing medical attention.

Research suggests that vaping THC oil, especially oil that contains vitamin E acetate, can be particularly harmful to the lungs. Vitamin E acetate, which is regularly added to THC when preparing it for use in e-cigarettes and vaping devices, is particularly harmful when it's inhaled.

Vaping THC can cause the same long term health effects as cannabis which include:

- Issues with attention, memory, and learning.
- Loss of coordination
- Distorted senses (such as sound, sight, and touch)
- Anxiety, paranoia, and hallucinations.
- Increased risk of psychotic illness such as schizophrenia as well as other mental health issues. Risk of schizophrenia is increased if you use cannabis from a young age, frequent use, stronger cannabis i.e. skunk, and family history of schizophrenia.

*These can happen during use, and may settle when stopped, but use can also aggravate existing mental health issues.*

### **Data on THC Vaping**

E-cigarettes are being used to take cannabis. However, there is no published data either nationally or locally about the prevalence of THC vaping.

The public and professionals should be encouraged to report any adverse effects of using e-cigarettes via the MHRA Yellow Card Yellow Card MHRA.

## Why is vaping THC becoming popular with young people?

THC can be extracted from the cannabis plant and used in a form of oil.

- E-cigarette companies are targeting young people with their distinct and colourful branding
- Currently a trend
- Easily accessible and affordable
- Little to no smell once the THC is vapourised
- Easy to conceal
- Popular on social media e.g. Snapchat and Instagram



## Are vapes used to take other drugs?

In short, yes. Since the 2016 Psychoactive Substances Act, production of many synthetic cannabinoid previously obtained through licensed Head Shops has transferred to the illicit market. There are many variations but often referred to as 'Spice'. As production and distribution is controlled by dealers, the strength of the products has increased including number of adulterants.

There are reports of young people ending up in hospital after unknowingly vaping the powerful synthetic cannabinoid drug 'spice', thinking it is cannabis oil.

## Dangers of Spice include:

- it's highly addictive
- leaves users incapacitated, unable to move or formulate sentences
- **risk of overdose and death.**

In 2021 the Office for National Statistics recorded drug-related poisonings where new synthetic cannabinoid (likely to be Spice) were mentioned on the death certificate. [Office of National Statistics, Deaths related to drug poisoning by selected substances, Aug, 2022.]

## Why are vapes being used to take Spice?

Dealers have picked up on THC vape trend, and how popular they are with young people. Oil from Spice is cheaper to produce than cannabis oil, so is it often the synthetic THC that drug dealers will put into these vapes. Dealers then sell the vapes under the fake guise that it includes real THC, which can lead to young people having bad reactions and left in vulnerable states. Key is to educate young people of dangers of vaping and to advise moving away from 'THC' labelled vapes



## What to do if you find a suspected illegal substance?

*If you find something that you believe to be an illegal substance, please contact 101 for advice on what to do.*

- Change Grow Live supports young people under the age of 25 who are using any drugs and/ or alcohol, including vapes which contain THC.
- We have a team of experts who can support the young person to reduce their use, stop, or understand how to do things more safely.
- We go to the young person wherever they feel safe and comfortable. This can include the community, schools, etc.
- We provide education and awareness workshops to schools, colleges, youth zones, and community centers.
- We provide training for professionals and partners in the community.

You can contact us on to discuss a case or access support on

07769205626 if would like to make an referrals can be made via our website: ...

<https://www.changegrowlive.org/croydon-young-people/help>