

# Electronic cigarettes – nicotine

## What is nicotine?

- Nicotine is an odourless, yellowish liquid that is the main addictive ingredient of tobacco.
- Nicotine works by mimicking some of the naturally occurring chemicals in the brain which produce a feeling of euphoria.
- Nicotine is addictive because the brain starts to rely on nicotine to work properly, becoming less sensitive to its own chemical, acetylcholine.

## Is nicotine harmful?

- In the amounts found in cigarettes and electronic cigarettes, nicotine is not thought to be harmful.
- Nicotine does not cause cancer. In quantities found in cigarettes, the health impact of nicotine has been likened to that of caffeine.
- Nicotine is very addictive and causes people to continue smoking tobacco, which contains lots of other more harmful chemicals.