

Tobacco increases risk of schizophrenia, psychosis

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Tobacco smokers are at increased risk of psychotic disorders such as schizophrenia, according to University of Queensland researchers.

Their review of eight long-running studies has found strong evidence of an association between smoking and [mental illness](#), which they suggest is most likely caused by nicotine.

Associate Professor James Scott said the findings raised serious concerns about the increasing use of nicotine through e-cigarettes by young adults.

"People who smoke tobacco have an approximately twofold increased risk of developing schizophrenia or psychosis," Dr. Scott said.

"While e-cigarettes reduce some of the harms associated with smoking, governments need to consider their potential to harm the mental health of young people."

Dr. Scott said e-cigarettes were often reported to be safe, and marketing was directed towards young people.

"More research is urgently needed to examine the association between [e-cigarette](#) use and psychosis, particularly in adolescents and [young adults](#)," Dr. Scott said.

"Until there is a better understanding of the harm of e-cigarettes, it would be safest that liquid nicotine remains illegal to buy in Australia without a prescription."

The review is published in *Frontiers in Psychiatry*.

More information: James G. Scott et al. Evidence of a Causal Relationship Between Smoking Tobacco and Schizophrenia Spectrum Disorders, *Frontiers in Psychiatry* (2018). [DOI: 10.3389/fpsyt.2018.00607](#)

Provided by University of Queensland

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