



Kpods In Singapore: The Law Changed, And Free Help Closes On 1 September

Description

If you have been half-following the **kpods Singapore** story since last year, almost everything you memorised is now out of date. Etomidate was a Class C controlled drug for eight months. It is not anymore. Since 1 May 2026 it sits under the Tobacco and Vaporisers Control Act as a Specified Psychoactive Substance, and it was removed from the Misuse of Drugs Act on the same day.

There is also a deadline next week that almost nobody is talking about. The QuitVape programme, the free route into help for etomidate use, **closes on 1 September 2026**. Anyone enrolled before that date will be supported to finish. Everyone after has to go through IMH instead, where the service is chargeable.



Source: Health Sciences Authority, Singapore

What kpods actually contain

Etomidate is a general anaesthetic. In a hospital it goes into a vein, under supervision, with a monitor beeping next to you. In a kpod it goes into your lungs on a street corner.

MOH and HSA issued a joint circular to emergency departments and psychiatry teams in July 2025 listing what clinicians should look for. The list is long and it is not subtle:

- Sedation, loss of consciousness, confusion, slurred speech, motor incoordination
- Myoclonus, meaning involuntary muscle jerks, and seizures
- Respiratory depression or apnoea, bronchospasm, laryngospasm, hypoxia
- Hypotension, bradycardia and arrhythmias, especially once hypoxia sets in
- Chemical pneumonitis and acute lung injury from inhaling e-liquid additives

HealthHub is blunter still. It lists serious psychiatric effects including suicidal behaviour, and disruption of vital body functions that can be fatal in severe cases. HSA has said publicly that etomidate can lead to physical dependence.

The point that lands hardest for most people is a simpler one. Six substances are covered, not just etomidate: metomidate, butomidate and its variants, isopropoxate, propoxate and trifluoro-etomidate. Whatever a seller tells you is inside, they do not know either.



Source: gov.sg

The kpods Singapore law moved twice in a year

Here is the sequence, because a lot of circulating advice is stuck at step two.

- Before 1 September 2025: handled under the Poisons Act. Possession carried up to two years and a \$10,000 fine.
- 1 September 2025 to 30 April 2026: etomidate listed as a Class C controlled drug under the Misuse of Drugs Act. This was always meant to be temporary.
- From 1 May 2026: listed as a Specified Psychoactive Substance under the Tobacco and Vaporisers Control Act, and delisted from the Misuse of Drugs Act.

MHA explained the reasoning in Parliament in September 2025. There was not enough evidence of long-term addictiveness to keep it under drug law permanently, and etomidate is not proscribed under the UN drug conventions. The MDA listing was an emergency measure while MOH built the proper legislation.

The penalties, in plain numbers

The move out of drug law did not soften anything. For Specified Psychoactive Substances:

- Suppliers: 2 to 10 yearsâ?? jail, plus 2 to 5 strokes of the cane
- Importers: 3 to 20 yearsâ?? jail, plus 5 to 15 strokes
- Possession, purchase or consumption: fine up to \$20,000, or up to 10 yearsâ?? jail, or both
- Consuming overseas is an offence for citizens and PRs

For ordinary vapes with no SPS in them, the maximum fine for possession, purchase or use went from \$2,000 to **\$10,000** on 1 May 2026. Suppliers face mandatory jail up to six years and fines up to \$200,000. Importers face up to nine years and \$300,000.

New offences also target adults who leave these products where children can reach them, or who involve young people in supply. Those carry up to 10 years for a first offence, and 4 to 20 years plus caning for involving a young or vulnerable person in import or supply.

Foreigners get a separate track. Short-term visit pass holders who reoffend are banned from re-entry. Long-term pass holders can lose their pass on a third offence. Anyone caught with etomidate vapes, or who tests positive for it, can have their pass revoked and be deported and banned, first offence included.

What the enforcement numbers say

MOH and HSA published the April to June 2026 quarter on 11 August 2026. In those three months, 2,428 people were caught and penalised for possessing or using vaporisers. Of those, 457 involved etomidate.

That works out to about 809 cases a month, roughly 30 per cent below the 1,219 a month recorded between June and August 2025. Nine people were charged over alleged import or supply of etomidate pods, six of them allegedly part of a transnational syndicate with over \$880,000 of pods seized.

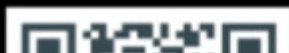
The school figures are the ones parents should sit with. Schools and institutes of higher learning referred 245 students to HSA in that quarter alone, and more than 480 young people received cessation counselling. Rehabilitation take-up tells its own story too: 787 offenders placed on programmes since 1 September 2025, 245 completed, 288 defaulted.

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DAMAGES
YOUR LUNGS, HEART AND B**

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**Quitting isn't easy,
but you don't have to face it alone**

**Find the support you need through
the **QuitVape Programme** today**



Source: Health Promotion Board, Singapore

Where to get help, and the rule that matters most

The rule is this. If you come forward voluntarily, there is no penalty and no offence record. Patients who seek medical help are not pursued for previous e-vapouriser use. That protection does not extend to being separately caught vaping, but it is real and it is worth using.

- HPB QuitLine: **1800 438 2000**, free for citizens and PRs
- I Quit Programme: a 28-day intervention with SMS nudges or tele-counselling, at healthhub.sg/programmes/iquit
- IMH National Addictions Management Service: quitvape@nhghealth.com.sg, or the appointment form at for.sg/quitvapeapt
- WE CARE Community Services: 3165 8017, or WhatsApp 8391 3023
- Singapore Anti-Narcotics Association: 6732 1122
- Fei Yue Community Services: 6485 8749
- SAF personnel: 24-hour counselling hotline on 1800 278 0022

The etomidate rehabilitation programme itself is standardised across providers: four individual counselling sessions plus two group sessions, covering triggers, cravings, a relapse-prevention plan and rebuilding a support network. After 1 September 2026, referrals go through IMH and are chargeable, with subsidies for citizens and PRs referred from eligible sources.

To report an offence, HSA's Tobacco Regulation Branch takes calls on 6684 2036 or 6684 2037, from 7am to midnight daily including public holidays. The online form is at go.gov.sg/reportvape.

If someone collapses

Call **995**. Do not wait to see whether they come round, and do not worry about getting them into trouble. HealthHub's own guidance is to call immediately if someone collapses or shows severe symptoms after suspected etomidate vape use.

Tell the paramedics what you think was used. Etomidate intoxication looks like a lot of other things, and the clinical team can move faster if they are not guessing.

If a family member is in the middle of this, the week before 1 September is the cheapest window you will get. Take it.

This article covers a sensitive health topic. If you or someone you know is struggling with substance use or with thoughts of self-harm, the QuitLine and the services listed above can help you find the right support.

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