



**CARROLL COUNTY
GENERAL HEALTH DISTRICT**
Healthy People — Safe Communities

Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Severe Pulmonary Disease Associated with E-Cigarettes or Vaping

On September 30, 2019, Amy Acton, MD, MPH, Director of the Ohio Department of Health, declared that severe pulmonary illness following the use of e-cigarettes, or vaping, poses a threat to the health and welfare of the residents of Ohio by creating a risk of human fatality or disability. To protect the people and address the risk, health care providers, or any individuals having knowledge, are ordered to report by the end of the next business day all suspected cases of severe pulmonary illness of unclear etiology with a history of vaping in the ninety (90) days prior to symptom onset.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and multiple states are investigating the occurrence of severe pulmonary disease among people who report vaping. As of September 26, 2019, state and local public health officials in Ohio have confirmed 21 cases of vaping-related severe pulmonary illness and are investigating an additional 19 reports of illness among patients experiencing serious respiratory symptoms following e-cigarette or vaping product use.

Multiple states across the country have reported clusters of patients experiencing severe respiratory disease after using e-cigarette or vapor products. As of September 26, 2019, 805 cases have been reported across 46 states and one U.S. territory. Twelve deaths have been confirmed in ten states.

E-cigarettes typically contain nicotine, most also contain flavorings and other chemicals, and some may contain marijuana or other substances. They are known by many different names and come in many shapes, sizes and device types. Devices may be referred to as “e-cigs,” “vapes,” “e-hookahs,” “vape pens,” “mods,” tanks, or electronic nicotine delivery systems (ENDS). Some e-cigarette devices resemble other tobacco products such as cigarettes; some resemble ordinary household items such as USB flash drives, pens, and flashlights; and others have unique shapes. Use of e-cigarettes is sometimes referred to as “vaping” or “juuling.” The vaping liquid is contained in a pod. A single Juul pod has the nicotine equivalent of twenty cigarettes. E-cigarettes used for dabbing are sometimes called “dab” pens. E-cigarettes can contain harmful or potentially harmful substances, including nicotine, heavy metals (e.g., lead), volatile organic compounds, and cancer-causing chemicals. Additionally, some e-cigarette products are used to deliver illicit substances; may be acquired from unknown or unauthorized (i.e., “street”) sources; and may be modified for uses that could increase their potential for harm to the user.

Youth, young adults, pregnant women, as well as adults who do not currently use tobacco products should not use e-cigarettes. E-cigarettes containing nicotine have the potential to help some individual adult smokers reduce their use of and transition away from cigarettes. However, e-cigarettes are not currently approved by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) as a quit smoking aid, and the available science is inconclusive on whether e-cigarettes are effective for quitting smoking.

Patients have reported vaping in the weeks to months prior to illness. Many patients have reported using THC and nicotine. The latest findings from the national investigation into lung injuries associated with e-

cigarette use, or vaping, suggest products containing THC play a role in the outbreak. The investigation is ongoing. No specific product has been identified by all cases, nor has any product been conclusively linked to this clinical syndrome.

Respiratory symptoms include:

- Cough
- Shortness of breath
- Fatigue

Other symptoms may include:

- Fever
- Anorexia
- Pleuritic chest pain
- Nausea
- Abdominal pain
- Diarrhea

Recommendations for the Public:

1. If you experience any of the previous symptoms with a history of vaping, contact your healthcare provider immediately.
2. While this investigation is ongoing, if you are concerned about these specific health risks, consider refraining from using e-cigarette products.
3. Regardless of the ongoing investigation, anyone who uses e-cigarette products should not buy these products off the street (e.g., e-cigarette products with THC, other cannabinoids) and should not modify e-cigarette products or add any substances to these products that are not intended by the manufacturer.
4. Regardless of the ongoing investigation, e-cigarette products should not be used by youth, young adults, pregnant women, as well as adults who do not currently use tobacco products. If you use e-cigarette products, monitor yourself for symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath, chest pain) and promptly seek medical attention if you have concerns about your health. CDC and FDA will continue to advise and alert the public as more information becomes available.
5. Adult smokers who are attempting to quit should use evidence-based treatments, including counseling and FDA-approved medications. If you who need help quitting tobacco products, including e-cigarettes, contact your doctor.
6. If you are concerned about harmful effects from e-cigarette products, call your local poison control center at: 1-800-222-1222.
7. We encourage the public to submit detailed reports of any unexpected tobacco or e-cigarette-related health or product issues to the FDA via the online Safety Reporting Portal:
<https://www.safetyreporting.hhs.gov>.

For more information, please contact Caitlin Mathews, Tobacco Treatment Specialist, at the Carroll County General Health District at (330) 627-4866, ext. 1559, or visit the Carroll County General Health District website at <https://www.carroll-lhd.org/>.

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