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**E-cigarette and Vaping Product Use-Associated Lung Injury Outbreak (EVALI)**

**Key Facts & Messages**

*This information is current as of October 28, 2019*

Since June 2019, the Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC), the U.S. Food & Drug Administration (FDA) and state and local health departments, including the Vermont Department of Health, have been investigating a multi-state outbreak of a severe lung injury associated with e-cigarette product use, or vaping (now being referred to as EVALI, which stands for E-cigarette, or Vaping, product use-Associated Lung Injury).

**Vermont Department of Health EVALI (Lung Injury Investigation):** [healthvermont.gov/vapinginjury](http://www.healthvermont.gov/vapinginjury)

**WHAT WE KNOW**

As of October 23, there have been 1,604 cases reported from 49 states, the District of Columbia and the U.S. Virgin Islands. 34 deaths in people have been confirmed in 24 states.

* All cases have a history of vaping.
* Most patients report a history of using products containing THC (tetrahydrocannabinol), particularly those obtained from informal sources.
* Nicotine products have **not** been excluded as a potential factor.
* No single cause has been linked to all lung injury cases, and there may be more than one cause.

The latest findings suggest products containing THC, particularly those obtained from informal sources, play a major role in this outbreak, but specific substances, chemical exposure(s) or routes of exposure, products, methods of use or combinations involved are still unknown.

**WHAT WE DON’T KNOW**

* We don’t yet know what specific chemical exposure(s) are causing these lung injuries.
* No single product or substance has been linked to all lung injury cases.
* While most people who have gotten sick reported using products containing THC, we cannot exclude the possibility that products containing nicotine may play a role.

**IN VERMONT**

* As of October 23, there are 3 confirmed cases in Vermont with no deaths.
* The Health Department confirmed its first case in a Vermont resident on September 16, 2019.

For current information and resources, visit: [healthvermont.gov/vapinginjury](http://www.healthvermont.gov/vapinginjury) (update weekly)

**KEY MESSAGES FOR VERMONTERS**

* **This is a serious health emergency for people who use e-cigarettes or other vaping products.**
* **DO NOT use e-cigarette or vaping products that contain THC**.
* **Do not buy vaping products from informal sources**, especially anything containing THC.
* **Do not modify or add substances** to e-cigarettes or vapes that are not intended by the manufacturer, even if you bought it through a retail establishment.
* **Refrain from using vaping products that contain nicotine**. Since we don’t know the cause(s) of lung injury, the only way to make sure you are not at risk is to not vape.
* **Get medical attention immediately** if you recently used an e-cigarette or vaping product and develop symptoms associated with this outbreak:
  + Cough, shortness of breath or chest pain
  + Nausea, vomiting or diarrhea
  + Fatigue, fever or abdominal pain
* **Symptoms of the flu are similar to symptoms of EVALI.** If you used an e-cigarette or vaping product and think you may have the flu, see your health care provider immediately. Providers should also consider flu in all patients with suspected EVALI. Get vaccinated against the flu.
* **Do not return to smoking cigarettes**.

**Get Help Quitting Tobacco or Vaping Products**

* Young adults and teens can text “*VtVapeFree*” to 88709 to get help and support for quitting e-cigarettes and vaping.
* For help quitting nicotine – including e-cigarettes: Go to [802quits.org](http://www.802Quits.org) or dial 1-800-QUIT-NOW.
* For help to stop using cannabis – including vaping products: Dial 2-1-1 (weekdays 8 am-8pm) or go to [healthvermont.gov/find-treatment](https://www.healthvermont.gov/alcohol-drug-abuse/how-get-help/find-treatment) to find treatment options near you.

**Find updated information at** [**healthvermont.gov/vapinginjury**](http://www.healthvermont.gov/vapinginjury)

**FOR HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS**

* Vermont Department of Health Update: [E-cigarette or Vaping-associated Lung Injury (EVALI)](https://www.healthvermont.gov/sites/default/files/documents/pdf/HAN-VapingIllness-Update-10-18-19-FINAL.pdf)  (October 18, 2019)
* CDC: [Fact Sheet for Evaluating and Caring for Patients with Suspected EVALI (October 25, 2019)](https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/basic_information/e-cigarettes/severe-lung-disease/healthcare-providers/pdfs/evaluating-caring-evali-patients.pdf)
* CDC: Clinician Outreach and Communication Activity Webinar Slides – [Update: Interim Guidance for Health Care Providers Evaluating and Caring for Patients with suspected EVALI (October 17, 2019)](https://emergency.cdc.gov/coca/calls/2019/callinfo_101719.asp)
* CDC: Coding guidance for healthcare encounters related to e-cigarette, or vaping, product use associated lung injury: [International Classification of Diseases, Tenth Edition, Clinical Modification (ICD-10-CM) – Supplement](https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/icd/Vapingcodingguidance2019_10_17_2019.pdf)

**QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ABOUT THIS OUTBREAK**

1. **What is causing this outbreak of lung injury?**

* At this time, CDC and FDA have not identified the cause or causes of the lung injuries. The only commonality among all cases is that patients report the use of e-cigarette, or vaping, products.
* No single compound of ingredient has emerged as the cause of these injuries to date, and there may be more than one cause. Available data suggest THC-containing products play a role in this outbreak, but the specific chemical or chemicals responsible for lung injury have not yet been identified, and nicotine-containing products have not been excluded as a possible cause.
* The outbreak is occurring in the context of widespread availability for e-cigarette or vaping products, which may have a mix of ingredients, complex packaging and supply chains, and include potentially illicit substances. Users may not know what is in their e-cigarette or e-liquid solutions. Many of the products and substances can be modified by suppliers or users. They can be obtained from stores, online retailers, from informal sources (e.g. friends, family members).
* More information is needed to know whether one or more e-cigarette or vaping products, substances, brands, or methods of use is responsible for the outbreak.

1. **What are the symptoms of lung injury reported by some patients in this outbreak?**

* Patients in the national outbreak have reported symptoms such as:
  + cough, shortness of breath or chest pain
  + nausea, vomiting, abdominal pain or diarrhea
  + fatigue, fever or weight loss
* Some patients have reported that their symptoms developed over a few days, while others have reported their symptoms developed over several weeks. A chemical exposure, not a lung infection, appears to be causing the injury.

1. **What should I do if I have used e-cigarettes and have symptoms?**

* Get medical attention right away if you have symptoms like those reported in this outbreak.
* You can also call the New England Poison Control Center at 1-800-222-1222 or text “POISON” to 85511.
* You can also submit a detailed report of any unexpected health or product issues related to tobacco or e-cigarette products to the FDA via the online [Safety Reporting Portal](https://www.fda.gov/tobacco-products/tobacco-science-research/safety-reporting-portal-tobacco-products).

1. **What if I quit smoking cigarettes and am now using e-cigarettes?**

* Until more is known about the exact cause of vaping-associated lung injuries, it’s recommended you consider refraining from using e-cigarette products. Do not return to smoking cigarettes.
* If you continue to use e-cigarettes, carefully watch for symptoms and get medical attention right away if you have symptoms like those reported in this outbreak.
* For help quitting nicotine – including e-cigarettes – go to [802quits.org](http://www.802Quits.org) – or dial 1-800-QUIT-NOW.

1. **Should I get vaccinated for the flu if I am using e-cigarettes or vaping products?**

* Yes. Everyone 6 months and older should get a flu vaccine every year, including people who use e-cigarettes, or vaping products.
* Flu vaccination can reduce flu illnesses, doctor’s visits, and missed work and school due to flu, as well as prevent flu-related hospitalizations and deaths.
* Because the symptoms of flu and lung injury are similar, if you use e-cigarettes or vape and experience symptoms get medical attention right away.
* CDC recommends that health care providers strongly consider respiratory infections as well as lung injury associated with the use of e-cigarette or vaping products in all patients who have respiratory symptoms AND a history of using these products.

1. **What is an e-cigarette?**

* Electronic cigarettes – or e-cigarettes – work by heating a liquid to produce an aerosol that is inhaled into the lungs.
* The liquid can contain nicotine, tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) and cannabinoid (CBD) oils, and other substances, flavorings, and additives.
* E-cigarettes are also called vapes, e-hookahs, vape pens, tank systems, mods, and electronic nicotine delivery systems (ENDS).

1. **What is vaping?**

* Using an e-cigarette is commonly called vaping. It has also been referred to as JUULing, named after the popular e-cigarette brand, JUUL.
* Vaping can refer to using e-cigarette products to inhale many substances, including nicotine and THC or CBD oils.

1. **What is marijuana/cannabis? What is THC?**

* Marijuana or cannabis, also called weed, pot, dope and other names, is the dried flowers and leaves of the cannabis plant.
* Cannabis contains mind-altering (i.e. psychoactive) compounds.
* THC (tetrahydrocannabinol) is a psychoactive compound found in cannabis.
* Cannabis also contains other active compounds like cannabidiol (CBD), which are not psychoactive.
* For more information about marijuana use, prevention and treatment in Vermont: [healthvermont.gov/marijuana](http://www.healthvermont.gov/marijuana)

**Primary Resources**

**Vermont Department of Health**

* EVALI (Lung Injury Investigation): [healthvermont.gov/vapinginjury](http://www.healthvermont.gov/vapinginjury)
* E-cigarettes and Vaping: [healthvermont.gov/wellness/tobacco/resources](https://www.healthvermont.gov/wellness/tobacco/resources)
* Flu: [healthvermont.gov/flu](https://www.healthvermont.gov/flu)

**Centers for Disease Control and Prevention**

* For the Public: [cdc.gov/lunginjury](https://www.cdc.gov/lunginjury)
* For Providers: [cdc.gov/tobacco/basic\_information/e-cigarettes/severe-lung-disease/healthcare-providers/index.html#flu](https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/basic_information/e-cigarettes/severe-lung-disease/healthcare-providers/index.html#flu)

**Food and Drug Administration**

* For the Public: [fda.gov/news-events/public-health-focus/lung-illnesses-associated-use-vaping-products](https://www.fda.gov/news-events/public-health-focus/lung-illnesses-associated-use-vaping-products)