



COUNTY OF ERIE

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DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

HEALTH ADVISORY # 353

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Outbreak of Pulmonary Illness Associated with Using E-cigarette Products

Please distribute to Healthcare Facilities/Hospitals, Emergency Departments, Infectious Disease Department, Family Medicine, Pediatrics, Director of Nursing, Medical Director, Laboratory Service, Pharmacy, and all patient care areas.

SUMMARY

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), New York State (NYS) and the Erie County Departments of Health (ECDOH) are investigating a multistate outbreak of severe pulmonary disease associated with e-cigarette product (devices, liquids, refill pods, and/or cartridges) use. This investigation is ongoing and has not identified a cause, but all reported cases have a history of using e-cigarette products. This advisory includes information on current case information, laboratory updates and reporting guidelines for patients experiencing pulmonary disease associated with e-cigarette products.

CURRENT SITUATION

As of September 6, 2019, over 450 possible cases of lung illness associated with the use of e-cigarette products have been reported to CDC from 33 states and 1 U.S. territory. As of the date of this advisory, 54 cases have been reported from various areas of NYS, including 16 cases in Western New York. In NYS, patients have ranged in age from 15-46 years and reported using at least one cannabis-containing vape product prior to becoming ill.

CLINICAL PRESENTATION

Patients have reported symptoms such as cough, shortness of breath, chest pain, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, fatigue, fever, and weight loss. Some patients have reported that their symptoms developed over a few days, while others have reported that their symptoms developed over several weeks. A pulmonary infection does not appear to be causing the symptoms, which have generally not improved with antibiotic treatment alone.

LABORATORY RESULTS ON PRODUCTS

Laboratory test results show very high levels of vitamin E acetate in nearly all cannabis-containing samples analyzed by NYS's Wadsworth Laboratory as part of this investigation. At least one vitamin E acetate containing vape product has been linked to each patient that submitted a product for testing. More detailed information about the vape products used is still being investigated, including the name and type of products as well as where they were obtained and methods of delivery and use.

CASE REPORTING

Health care providers who have identified persons experiencing pulmonary symptoms and have used vape products should report the possible case to their local poison control center at **1-800-222-1222**. Before calling, providers should have available patient demographics, symptomology, and the name(s) of recently used vape products and whether the actual product(s) used remain available for testing.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

For questions regarding this Health Advisory, please contact the ECDOH Office of Epidemiology and Disease Surveillance at (716) 858-7697 during normal business hours.

Additional information regarding pulmonary illness associated with e-cigarette use can be found on the following websites:

Erie County Department of Health

Pulmonary illness associated with e-cigarette use

<http://www2.erie.gov/health/index.php?q=electronic-cigarettes-e-cigarettes-and-similar-vapor-products>

New York State Department of Health

Updates on vaping related pulmonary illness and e-cigarette information and multimedia tools:

https://www.health.ny.gov/prevention/tobacco_control/campaign/e-cigarettes/

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Vaping related Pulmonary Illness:

https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/basic_information/e-cigarettes/severe-lung-disease.html

Electronic Cigarette information and multimedia tools:

https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/basic_information/e-cigarettes/index.htm

The ECDOH Health Alert & Advisory System is an e-mail notification system designed to alert community partners about important health related information. You can **sign up to receive** alerts & advisories at <http://www2.erie.gov/health/index.php?q=node/59>.

Health Category Definitions:

Health Alert FLASH: conveys the highest level of importance due to a large-scale, catastrophic public health emergency; warrants immediate action or attention

Health Alert Priority: conveys the highest level of importance; warrants immediate action or attention to a health problem or situation

Health Advisory: provides important information for a specific incident or situation; may not require immediate action

Health Update: provides updated information regarding an incident or situation; no immediate action necessary

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