

# Mysterious Vaping Illnesses Have Industry On Edge



To date, 215 possible cases of respiratory illness and even death by vape have been reported.

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All is not well in vapeland. Over the weekend, the Center for Disease Control (CDC) released a health alert with the headline: "Severe Pulmonary Disease Associated with Using E-Cigarette Products."

The warning came on the heels of reports that at least 215 people in 25 states have reported lung-related illnesses associated with e-cigarettes or vapes. The first known death was in Illinois, where a patient who reported using E-cigarettes was hospitalized with severe respiratory

illness and later died. That state alone has seen the number of cases of people reporting respiratory problems from e-cigarettes or vapes double in the past week.

On Sunday, *The New York Times* released a bombshell story that quoted Dr. Melodi Pirzada, chief pediatric pulmonologist at NYU Winthrop Hospital in Mineola, N.Y., as calling the situation “an epidemic.” The article went on to say: “Patients, mostly otherwise healthy and in their late teens and 20s, are showing up with severe shortness of breath, often after suffering for several days with vomiting, fever and fatigue. Some have wound up in the intensive care unit or on a ventilator for weeks.”

## **Not Just a Nicotine Problem**

While research remains to be done, some reputable organizations consider vaping to be a safe alternative to tobacco. The Government agency Public Health England has said that vaping is safer than smoking and could lead to the demise of the traditional cigarette.

However, the CDC warns that E-cigarettes can contain harmful substances, such as nicotine, heavy metals (like lead), volatile organic compounds, and cancer-causing chemicals. They go on to say that some products causing these illnesses may have been acquired from unknown or unauthorized (i.e., “street”) sources; and can be modified, increasing their potential for harm to the user.

But this isn’t just a problem for tobacco smokers. According to the CDC, “many patients have reported using e-cigarettes containing cannabinoid products such as THC or CBD.”

## **What Should You Do**

While acknowledging that the recent vaping illnesses are part

of an ongoing investigation, the CDC offers several recommendations to a public on edge:

## **Don't buy vapes from an un reputable source**

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.

## **Monitor your symptoms**

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.

## **Write down this information**

If you are concerned about harmful effects from e-cigarette products, call your local poison control center at: 1-800-222-1222. The CDC also encourages 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.govexternal> icon.

Vaping is generally considered one of the safest forms of consuming cannabis. According to a study by Public Health England

<https://www.greenentrepreneur.com/article/338922>