



HEALTH ADVISORY: *Severe respiratory illness in young adults with history of vaping*

Issued: 08/14/2019

Background:

Several states (including Illinois, Wisconsin, Minnesota, and California) have recently reported suspect cases of severe lung injury among patients with a history of vaping. Vaping refers to the increasingly popular practice of inhaling vapor from an e-cigarette device, which works by heating a liquid that can contain nicotine, marijuana, or other drugs. The long-term health impacts of vaping are unknown. Reported symptoms include cough, fatigue, dizziness, headache, vomiting and diarrhea, chest pain, and worsening difficulty breathing, sometimes requiring intensive care. Many cases have initially presented with a history of cough that does not respond to treatment, and have no signs of an infectious cause for their symptoms. Over the course of several days to a week, symptoms progress and cases present with worsening respiratory distress, sometimes requiring ventilator support. No specific products have been identified yet.

A potential case of severe respiratory illness in a young adult with a history of vaping (product names are unknown) has been reported in Iowa and is currently being investigated.

Local public health departments:

- Continue to advocate that youth should not use vaping products and e-cigarettes, and adults should be informed about the dangers of such products.
- Please share this health alert broadly with healthcare providers in your jurisdiction.

Healthcare providers:

- Ask patients who present with respiratory symptoms about vaping and e-cigarette use.
- When treating patients with respiratory symptoms who report a history of vaping, consider consultation with a pulmonologist and conduct a thorough infectious disease evaluation.
- Report suspected cases to IDPH at 800-362-2736 during business hours and after hours call 515-323-4360 (the Iowa State Patrol will page the on-call public health epidemiologist).