



Caddo County Health Department

For Immediate Release

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First Oklahoma Case of Vaping-Associated Lung Injury Confirmed

The Oklahoma State Department of Health (OSDH) has confirmed the first case in the state associated with a national occurrence of serious lung injuries related to e-cigarette and vaping product use. The patient is a Tulsa County resident under the age of 18.

State health officials began the investigation in early September when they issued an advisory to health care providers requesting them to report any cases of severe pulmonary disease of unknown origin and a history of recent e-cigarette use. Since then, OSDH officials continue to review medical records, gather data and conduct patient interviews.

“We are committed to working with our state and federal partners to learn everything we can about this investigation in order to prevent further injury and potential death,” said Commissioner of Health Gary Cox. “E-cigarettes are unregulated, and of great concern is the significant number of young people using the products. The public is advised to consider refraining from using all e-cigarette and vaping products while the investigation is ongoing.”

Regardless of the investigation, health officials advise strongly against buying e-cigarette and vaping products off the street and modifying products or adding substances not intended by the manufacturer. At no time are e-cigarette or vaping products recommended for use by youth, young adults, pregnant women or adults who do not currently use tobacco products. There is no safe amount of nicotine exposure, and there is no e-cigarette product or vape device recommended by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) as a cessation device.

People who are using e-cigarette or vaping devices as a method for quitting tobacco are urged not to return to smoking cigarettes. Adult smokers who are attempting to quit should use evidence-based treatments including counseling and FDA-approved medications. Those who need help quitting tobacco products, including e-cigarettes and vaping products, should contact a health care provider or the Oklahoma Tobacco Helpline at 1-800-QUIT-NOW (784-8669).

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), e-cigarette or vaping products are also called vapes, e-hookahs, vape pens, tank systems, mods, and electronic nicotine delivery systems (ENDS). Using an e-cigarette or vapor product is commonly called vaping. Vaping can also refer to using an e-cigarette or vaping product to inhale many substances, including nicotine and THC or CBD oils.

Preliminary data from the 2019 Oklahoma Youth Risk Behavior Survey shows a 70% increase from 2017 to 2019 in the current electronic vapor products (EVPs) use by Oklahoma high school students. In particular, the 2019 preliminary data shows that more than a quarter of high school students in Oklahoma currently use EVPs. Among Oklahoma adults, data from the 2018 Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System shows that 1 in 12 adults in Oklahoma were current e-cigarette users. Oklahoma had the highest prevalence of current e-cigarette use among adults in the nation for two years in a row (2016-2017).

Patients involved in the nationwide investigation have reported symptoms such as prolonged cough, shortness of breath, chest pain, nausea, vomiting, fatigue, fever and abdominal pain. Individuals who have a history of e-cigarette use or vaping in the last 90 days, and are experiencing any of these symptoms should contact a health care provider as soon as possible.

For more information visit, <https://go.usa.gov/xVvFq>.

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