



MORROW COUNTY HEALTH DISTRICT
Pamela Butler, MPH Health Commissioner
619 W. Marion Rd., Suite B, Rm. 143
Mt. Gilead, OH 43338
Phone: (419) 947-1545
Fax: (419) 946-6807
Email: mchdpp@morrowcountyhealth.org
Online: www.morrowcountyhealth.org

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For more information, please contact
Stephanie Bragg, RN, BSN, MHA
Assistant Health Commissioner/Director of Nursing
stephanie.bragg@morrowcountyhealth.org | (419) 947-1545 x318

Severe Lung Disease Associated with E-cigarette Use

The CDC, Ohio Department of Health, and many other state and local health departments have been investigating reports of severe lung disease associated with e-cigarette use, also known as vaping. Reports have been received from multiple states about people who have become ill with a severe disease affecting their respiratory system. Many of the sick have needed medical attention during their illness. People who have been sick from this lung disease have reported symptoms including:

- Cough, shortness of breath, or chest pain
- Fever, fatigue, or weight loss
- Nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea

There has not yet been an infectious agent found to be the cause of this lung disease. Based on available information, this illness is most likely caused by a chemical exposure. All of the people who have been sick have reported using e-cigarettes. There has not yet been a specific e-cigarette product that has been linked to all of the cases. However, many patients have reported using liquid containing cannabinoid products. Public health agencies will continue to investigate this issue, and will provide updates when information is available.

E-cigarettes can be known by different names including: “e-cigs,” “vapes,” “mods,” “tank systems,” and “e-hookahs.” Users can get their devices and liquids from many places, including in stores, online, and by making their own. E-cigarette devices can come in various shapes and sizes, but most have a battery, heating element, and container to hold a liquid. The liquid used usually contains nicotine, flavorings, and other chemicals like propellants and oils. It can also contain cannabinoids, like tetrahydrocannabinol (THC), or other drugs. The e-cigarette devices are used to heat the liquid in order to produce a vapor. Users then inhale the vapor that is made.

As of September 12, 2019, the CDC reports that there have been more than 450 cases of this illness reported by 33 states. Many of these patients have needed to be admitted into the hospital for medical treatment. At this time,

there have been five deaths confirmed in California, Illinois, Indiana, Minnesota, and Oregon related to this disease.

Ohio has had 13 cases of the illness as of the Ohio Department of Health's latest update on September 12, 2019. The patients in these cases range in age from 16 – 26 years old. All of Ohio's 13 cases have been sick enough to need to stay in the hospital to recover. There are another 14 additional illness reports that are currently under investigation. Morrow County has received one report of a case that may meet the CDC case definition as of this time. This report is still under investigation.

The Ohio Department of Health provides an update of the current statewide information of this investigation on their website at: <https://odh.ohio.gov/wps/portal/gov/odh/know-our-programs/tobacco-use-prevention-and-cessation/news-and-events/>. This information is updated every Tuesday and Thursday at 2:00 p.m.

People who use e-cigarettes and are experiencing symptoms should seek prompt medical care. Healthcare providers should report any possible cases of this lung disease to their local health department for further investigation.

For questions or to report a possible case, please contact the Morrow County Health District at 419-947-1545.

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