

## Vaping and Lung Injury



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The U.S. Centers for Diseases Control and Prevention (CDC) is currently investigating 193 cases where severe lung injury has been linked to e-cigarettes or 'vaping' use across 22 states in America, with one reported death.

Vaping has gained significant popularity over the past few years, especially amongst teenagers, as an alternative to traditional cigarettes. The WHO has identified that cigarette smoking kills up to half of individuals who smoke throughout their lifetime, however, not much is known about the long-term effects of vaping.

The cases being investigated by the CDC have more than doubled within the past week, with all patients reporting the use of vaping products, with some additionally using tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) instead of nicotine.

Patients admitted to hospital described symptoms such as shortness of breath, coughing and tiredness/fatigue. Additionally, some patients are also reporting chest pains, diarrhoea, fever, weight loss and nausea.

Chest X-Rays from these patients have shown evidence of bilateral opacities and CT scans have also shown diffuse ground-glass opacities with evidence of sub-pleural sparing. The severity of some cases has meant patients have received mechanical ventilation as a result of the lung injury, however, conditions improved upon the administration of corticosteroids. Most patients did not show any signs of infection.

It is still under investigation as to whether these cases are due to a direct result of vaping, however, after previously recommending the use of vaping as a smoking alternative, the CDC has since sent out an emergency alert. This statement gives recommendations to healthcare systems and clinicians on the warning signs of lung injury as a result of vaping. U.S. healthcare providers are now encouraged to ask patients whether they have used vaping products, details on the specifications of their devices and also if they frequently use their device with illegal drugs.

The CDC hopes that the more information gathered on the background of these patients and their vaping use will give a clearer picture of the risks associated with electronic cigarettes.

Source: [BMJ](#)

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