



Department of Health and Human Services
Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention
286 Water Street
11 State House Station
Augusta, Maine 04333-0011
Tel: (207) 287-8016; Fax (207) 287-9058
TTY Users: Dial 711 (Maine Relay)

Maine Health Alert Network (HAN) System

PUBLIC HEALTH ADVISORY

To: Health Care Providers
From: Dr. Siiri Bennett, State Epidemiologist
Subject: **Maine Reports a Case of Lung Illness Related to E-Cigarette Use**
Date / Time: Friday, September 20, 2019 at 3:00PM
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Abstract:

The purpose of this health advisory is to alert clinicians to the first case in Maine of severe pulmonary disease linked to e-cigarette product use, or “vaping”.

Clinicians should consider vaping-associated pulmonary illness in the evaluation of patients with significant respiratory illness and a history of vaping. Patients presenting with significant respiratory illness of unclear etiology should be asked about their use of vaping products. For patients who have used vaping products, clinicians should ask about the extent of use, the type of instrument used, the type of vaping liquid used, and the place of purchase. Patients should also be asked if they still have the vaping liquid they used. If so, Maine CDC can assist with arranging laboratory testing of the liquid.

Reporting: Maine CDC asks that clinicians report cases that meet the criteria of (1) significant respiratory illness of unclear etiology and (2) a history of vaping. All suspect cases should be reported by phone to Maine CDC’s 24/7 disease reporting and consultation line at 1-800-821-5821 or by fax to 1-800-293-7534 using the [Disease Reporting Form](#). (attached).

Maine Reports a Case of Lung Illness Related to E-Cigarette Use

The purpose of this health advisory is to alert clinicians to the first case in Maine of severe pulmonary disease linked to e-cigarette product use, or “vaping”.

As of September 20, 2019, 530 possible cases of severe lung illness associated with vaping have been reported in 38 other states and one U.S. territory since June 28, 2019. Seven deaths in six states have been attributed to vaping-related illnesses. Symptoms have included cough, shortness of breath, chest pain, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, fatigue, fever, and abdominal pain, but more information is needed to determine the etiology.

Clinicians should consider vaping-associated pulmonary illness in the evaluation of patients with significant respiratory illness and a history of vaping. Patients presenting with significant respiratory illness of unclear etiology should be asked about their use of vaping products. For patients who have used vaping products, clinicians should ask about the extent of use, the type of instrument used, the type of vaping liquid used, and the place of purchase. Patients should also be asked if they still have the vaping liquid they used. If so, Maine CDC can assist with arranging laboratory testing of the liquid.

Reporting: Maine CDC asks that clinicians report cases that meet the criteria of (1) significant respiratory illness of unclear etiology and (2) a history of vaping. All suspect cases should be reported by phone to Maine CDC’s 24/7 disease reporting and consultation line at 1-800-821-5821 or by fax to 1-800-293-7534 using the [Disease Reporting Form](#). (attached).

Public messaging is:

- If you vape and have symptoms of lung illness, see your health care provider.
- If you are a health care provider and suspect a case meets the lung illness criteria, call 1-800-821-5821 or [email disease.reporting@maine.gov](mailto:disease.reporting@maine.gov). Please do not include personally identifying patient information.
- Schools needing policy or education assistance related to e-cigarettes/vaping may contact a local tobacco prevention provider ctimaine.org/resources/local-prevention-partners/.
- Learn more about e-cigarettes in [this toolkit](#).
- If you’ve never smoked or used other tobacco products or e-cigarettes, don’t start. If you use these products, help is available.

Free support to quit or help someone quit:

Phone: Call the Maine Tobacco HelpLine at 1-800-207-1230 to talk with a quit coach.

Web: Visit thequitlink.com for support, whether you are ready to quit or just thinking about it.

Support includes developing a plan to quit, texts, advice, and a supportive community of tobacco users who have quit.

Text: [The Truth Initiative](#) offers free text message programs for youth and young adults who want to quit vaping or smoking. It presents content by age group to give appropriate advice about quitting. It is also a resource for parents looking to help their children.

- Text Quit to 202-804-9884 to quit JUUL or e-cigs.
- Text QUITNOW to 202-759-6436 to quit cigarettes.

For more information:

- U.S. CDC updates on lung disease associated with vaping www.cdc.gov/tobacco/basic_information/e-cigarettes/severe-lung-disease.html
- Additional resources: ctimaine.org/resources/ends-vaping/
- Maine CDC Tobacco and Substance Use Prevention and Control Program: (207)287-4627 or tsup.dhhs@maine.gov
- Surgeon General's Advisory, e-cigarettes.surgeongeneral.gov/documents/surgeon-generals-advisory-on-e-cigarette-use-among-youth-2018.pdf.