

Third Kern County Hospitalization Associated With Vaping Confirmed

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Kern County, CA - The third case of vaping-associated pulmonary injury requiring hospitalization has been confirmed in Kern County. Statewide there have been 104 cases and two deaths reported since June 2019.

Vaping is inhaling an aerosol from a device that heats a liquid that can contain tobacco, marijuana (THC), cannabidiol (CBD) or other substances and has recently been linked to severe breathing problems, lung damage, and even death. The California Department of Public Health is urging everyone to quit vaping altogether, no matter the substance or the source.

Vaping-associated pulmonary injury symptoms include chest pain, shortness of breath, diarrhea, headaches, nausea, vomiting, cough, and, in some cases, seizures, nosebleeds, and the sensation of your heart beating through your chest.

Kern County Public Health has been working with the California Department of Public Health and local healthcare providers to collect information and investigate what is in the vape materials that is making people sick. "The recent reports of respiratory illnesses caused by vaping are alarming," says Matt Constantine, Director of Kern County Public Health Services, "we urge everyone to refrain from vaping."

37% of vaping-associated pulmonary injury cases reported nationwide are in children under the age of 21. The Food and Drug Administration reports that in 2018, e-cigarette use among high school students increased by 78% and e-cigarette use among middle school students increased by 48%. Parents should be aware that vaping devices are available in more than 15,000 flavors that may be attractive to children, such as mango, bubble gum, unicorn poop, and mint. The secondhand aerosol typically smells sweet so it can be hard to detect. The shapes and sizes of these devices vary and include colorful vape pens and new pod-based devices that can look like USB flash drives, cell phones, credit card holders, and highlighters.

If you or your child have vaped at all in the past few months and are having problems with breathing or other symptoms, you should seek medical care immediately and tell your healthcare provider about your history of vaping.

To learn about vaping visit CDPH website <https://www.cdph.ca.gov/>

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