

Department of Health Services: Majority of Wisconsin lung disease patients who reported vaping cite THC products

Posted on Thursday, Aug 29, 2019

>> WisPolitics is now on the State Affairs network. Get custom keyword notifications, bill tracking and all WisPolitics content. [Get the app or access via desktop.](#)

In the Wisconsin investigation of people with lung disease who reported vaping, 89% of the 27 cases interviewed so far reported using e-cigarettes or other vaping devices to inhale THC products, such as waxes and oils, the Wisconsin Department of Health Services announced today. THC is the active ingredient in marijuana. While most cases have reported vaping THC products, DHS is continuing to investigate all possible causes. The connection to THC products is based on interviews with cases, and the agency is working with FDA to determine the contents of used vaping products.

“Vaping cartridges containing THC may include chemicals or additives that are unknown, unregulated, and unsafe,” said Department of Health Services Secretary-designee Andrea Palm. “We strongly urge people not to vape.”

Health officials are continuing to conduct interviews with new patients as part of this investigation. Currently there are 32 cases, with 11 patients whose cases need further investigation. Fourteen counties now have cases, including: Dane, Dodge, Door, Green, Kenosha, La Crosse, Milwaukee, Portage, Racine, Sauk, Walworth, Washington, Waukesha, and Winnebago. No deaths have been reported in Wisconsin.

The 32 cases include both confirmed and probable cases. A case is defined as a person who had a history of vaping and developed a severe lung disease, and did not have any infection or other causes for their illness. A probable case includes

many of these factors and is likely to be confirmed, but more information is needed for confirmation. We continue to gather information from the 11 patients whose cases require further investigation.

This is a complex and ongoing investigation, and we are working to gather information about the products used, collect products for testing, and investigate new cases. Our investigation team has worked closely with FDA to coordinate testing, but we have not received results from those tests. We are also working with CDC, which is coordinating a national response to the nearly 200 illnesses in at least 22 other states. We will continue to provide updates when new information becomes available.

Anyone experiencing unexplained shortness of breath, chest pain, cough, nausea, vomiting, fever, and weight loss should talk to their doctor. People can learn more about e-cigarettes and vaping products—including what they look like, their health risks for youth, and how to talk to kids about them—at [tobaccoischanging.com](https://www.tobaccoischanging.com) ([link is external](#)). There are FDA-approved medications to help tobacco users quit. Call 1-800-QUIT NOW for free help.