

Wisconsin Department of Health Services: Cases of lung disease reported among teens who recently used electronic cigarettes

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Today the Wisconsin Department of Health Services confirmed 11 cases of teenagers and young adults with severe lung disease who all reported recent vaping. Seven other patients are under further investigation. Counties with confirmed cases include Door, Racine, Walworth, Dodge, Waukesha, and Winnebago.

E-Cigarettes and vaping products can contain toxic chemicals that can damage lungs, and long-term effects are not known. Public Health Madison & Dane County urges people not to use these products, and encourages parents to learn what they look like and how to talk to their kids about them—at tobaccoischanging.com.

General information about these confirmed cases can be found at www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/outbreaks

“We are currently interviewing patients, all of whom reported recent vaping. Our disease investigators continue to gather information about the names and types of vape products that were used in hopes of determining a common link,” said Department of Health Services Secretary-designee Andrea Palm.

Patients in this cluster experienced shortness of breath, fatigue, chest pain, cough, and weight loss. The severity of the disease has varied among patients, with some needing assistance to breathe. While patients have improved with treatment, we do not know if there will be long-term health effects.

“We strongly urge people to avoid vaping. Anyone—especially young people who have recently vaped—experiencing unexplained breathing problems should see a doctor,” says Palm.

For those interested in quitting tobacco use, including e-cigarettes, please call the Wisconsin Tobacco Quit Line at 1-800-QUIT-NOW.