

# ILLICIT THC IS THE LEADING CAUSE OF VAPING-RELATED LUNG INJURIES AND DEATH.



## THE VITAMIN E — THC CONNECTION

The CDC has identified vitamin E acetate as a chemical of concern among people with EVALI, an abbreviation for E-cigarette, or Vaping, product-use Associated Lung Injury. Recent CDC testing of fluid samples collected from the lungs of 29 patients with EVALI in 10 states found vitamin E acetate in all of the samples. Vitamin E acetate is used as an additive, most notably as a thickening agent in e-cigarettes or vaping products containing THC (tetrahydrocannabinol).

The latest national and state findings suggest THC-containing e-cigarette or vaping products particularly from informal sources like friends or family, or in-person or online dealers, are linked to most of the cases and have played a major role in the outbreak.



## WHAT IS NEW

The CDC has analyzed national data on use of THC-containing product brands by EVALI patients.

- Overall, EVALI patients reported 152 different THC-containing product brands.
- Dank Vapes, a class of largely counterfeit THC-containing products of unknown origin, was the most commonly reported product brand used by patients nationwide.
- The data further supports that EVALI is associated with THC-containing products and that it is not likely associated with a single THC-containing product brand.

## WHAT WE DON'T KNOW

While it appears that vitamin E acetate is associated with EVALI, evidence is not yet sufficient to rule out contribution of other chemicals of concern to EVALI. Many different substances and product sources are still under investigation, and there may be more than one cause of this outbreak.

## WHAT WE DO KNOW

According to the CDC, as of December 27, 2019, there have been 2,561 cases of EVALI reported to the CDC from all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and two U.S. territories (Puerto Rico and U.S. Virgin Islands). This includes **20 Delawareans with lung injuries**. Fifty-five deaths have also been confirmed in 27 states and the District of Columbia (as of December 27, 2019), including **one death in Delaware**. The median age of deceased patients was 53 years; ages ranged from 17 to 75 years (as of November 20, 2019).

*Among 11th-grade Delaware students who reported using a vaping device in the past year, **53% reported vaping marijuana.***

## A BREAKDOWN OF THE VAPING-RELATED OUTBREAK

Respiratory symptoms reported included cough, shortness of breath, and chest pain.

Gastrointestinal symptoms included nausea, vomiting, and diarrhea.

Nonspecific symptoms included fatigue, fever, and weight loss.

Approximately 95% of patients were hospitalized; 5% were not.

Nearly 70% of patients were male.

Approximately 15% of patients were under 18 years old.

More than 75% were 18 to 24 years old.

## WHAT TEENS SHOULD DO

The CDC recommends that people, especially young people, do not use THC-containing e-cigarette or vaping products. The CDC also recommends that people should **not**:

- Buy any type of e-cigarette or vaping products, particularly those containing THC, from informal sources like friends, family, or in-person or online dealers.
- Modify or add any substances to e-cigarette or vaping products that are not intended by the manufacturer, including products purchased through retail establishments.



## FOR REGULAR CDC UPDATES

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) updates its statistics on the outbreak of vaping-related hospitalizations and deaths every Thursday. For the most accurate and up-to-date information, visit [www.cdc.gov/tobacco/basic\\_information/e-cigarettes/severe-lung-disease.html](https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/basic_information/e-cigarettes/severe-lung-disease.html).