



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
October 17, 2019

CONTACT: Bill Christian  
615-741-2308  
[Bill.Christian@tn.gov](mailto:Bill.Christian@tn.gov)

## TDH REPORTS FIRST DEATH FROM VAPING-ASSOCIATED RESPIRATORY DISEASE Cluster of illness in 49 States Linked to E-cigarette Use

NASHVILLE, Tenn. – The Tennessee Department of Health has reported one death in a patient with serious respiratory disease associated with use of electronic cigarettes or other vaping devices. This is the first such death reported in Tennessee.

"We are extremely saddened by this loss of life and extend our sincere condolences to the patient's family," said Tennessee Health Commissioner Lisa Piercey, MD, MBA, FAAP. "We are working with partners across the country to investigate these cases of vaping-associated illness in Tennessee, and recommend Tennesseans consider refraining from using e-cigarettes or vaping while this investigation is underway."

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and U.S. Food and Drug Administration are investigating a cluster of severe pulmonary disease among people who use e-cigarettes or vape, with 1,299 cases reported as of Oct. 8 in 49 states, the District of Columbia and one U.S. territory including 26 deaths. There have now been 53 cases reported in Tennessee. Most of the patients are adolescents and young adults.

Patients associated with this outbreak have had symptoms including cough, shortness of breath and/or chest pain, growing worse over a period of days or weeks before admission to the hospital. Other symptoms may include fever, fatigue, nausea, vomiting and/or diarrhea. All patients have reported using e-cigarette or vaping products. At this time, no single product or substance has been linked to all the lung injury cases and the specific chemical or ingredient causing these injuries remains unknown. In many but not all cases, patients have acknowledged recent use of tetrahydrocannabinol or THC-containing e-cigarette products.

TDH is providing information about this investigation and the number of Tennessee patients associated with this outbreak online at [www.tn.gov/health/cedep/vaping-illness.html](http://www.tn.gov/health/cedep/vaping-illness.html). This page will be updated weekly by 3:30 p.m. Central time each Thursday with any additional cases reported.

Electronic cigarettes and other vaping devices are not approved by the FDA for smoking cessation. Smokers who are attempting to quit should use evidence-based treatments including counseling and FDA-approved medications. If you need help quitting tobacco products including e-cigarettes, contact your health care provider, your [local health department](#) or the Tennessee Tobacco QuitLine at 1-800-QUIT-NOW or [www.tnquitline.org/](http://www.tnquitline.org/).

###

This news release can be accessed online at [www.tn.gov/health/news.html](http://www.tn.gov/health/news.html).  
**Connect with TDH on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [LinkedIn](#) @TNDeptofHealth!**