



COUNTY OF SAN LUIS OBISPO HEALTH AGENCY  
PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT

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## PROVIDER HEALTH ADVISORY

**Date:** August 20, 2019

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### Severe Pulmonary Disease Associated with Vaping: Be Alert for Illness and Report Suspected Cases

Following state and national reports of severe pulmonary disease associated with vaping, the County of San Luis Obispo Public Health Department is asking providers to be alert for illness and contact the Public Health Department regarding any suspected cases.

CDC has reported 94 possible cases in 14 states from late June to August 15, 2019. This includes 20 cases in California, with seven in Kings County.

Patients have presented with progressive respiratory distress, sometimes initially diagnosed with pneumonia or bronchitis, and some with preceding fevers and gastrointestinal symptoms. All cases failed to respond to an initial course of antibiotic treatment. Patients required admission to the hospital with significant respiratory support. Patients have improved with systemic steroids.

A reported common exposure among these patients is vaping (using e-cigarettes) within the prior weeks or months. Many reported recently vaping cannabis products; however, no specific product has been identified by all cases or been conclusively linked to this clinical syndrome. At this time, no infectious cause has been identified.

The Public Health Department asks that providers:

- **Be alert for potential cases** among persons presenting with severe acute pulmonary symptoms and ask these patients about their recent history of vaping.
- **Request vaping devices and cartridges** (including tanks, pods, liquids and bottles) if patients acknowledge a recent history of vaping. Refrigerate samples in a sealed container labeled with name and case information. Forward samples to the Public Health Laboratory.
- **Promptly report all suspected cases** to the Public Health Department by calling 805-781-5500 (M-F, 8 a.m.–5 p.m.) or 805-781-4553 (weekends and after hours).

For more information, see CDC's recent clinician notice at <https://emergency.cdc.gov/newsletters/coca/081619.htm>.

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#### Public Health Department

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