



Edward D. Hill
Director

Milton Teske, M.D.
Health Officer



To promote and protect the health and well-being of Kings County residents through education, prevention, and intervention.

330 Campus Dr. Hanford, CA 93230
Telephone: (559) 584-1401
Fax: (559) 582-7618

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
DATE: October 7, 2019

Contact: Nancy Gerking, 559-852-2574
EMAIL: Nancy.Gerking@co.Kings.ca.us

Death Associated with E-Cigarettes in Kings County

Department of Public Health Warns Against Vaping

HANFORD - The Kings County Department of Public Health is confirming that an individual from Kings County has died from complications related to the use of e-cigarettes and is warning community members about the dangerous effects of using electronic cigarettes, or e-cigarettes.

“With sadness, we report that there has been a death of a Kings County resident suspected to be related to severe pulmonary injury associated with vaping,” said Dr. Milton Teske, Kings County Public Health Officer. “The Kings County Department of Public Health would like to warn all residents that the use of e-cigarettes pose a risk to the health of the lungs and can potentially cause severe lung injury that may even lead to death. Long-term effects of vaping on health are unknown. But a number of patients treated here are still not back to normal many weeks after hospital discharge. Weakness and shortness of breath are continuing in spite of ongoing use of steroids. It is possible that this lung injury could result in permanent damage to the lungs. Anyone considering vaping should be aware of the serious potential risk associated with vaping.”

There have been twelve reports of pulmonary illness associated with vaping in Kings County, and an increasing number of similar illnesses related to vaping being reported nationwide. Symptoms of vape-associated pulmonary (respiratory) injury (VAPI) can include shortness of breath, coughing, chest pain, nausea, fever, vomiting, or diarrhea.

Anyone who has previously used e-cigarettes and is experiencing worsening respiratory symptoms should seek prompt evaluation. Any providers caring for individuals with severe pulmonary illness which is suspected to be related to vaping should report cases to the Kings County Department of Public Health at (559) 584-1401.

E-cigarettes are battery-powered devices that individuals use to inhale an aerosol, which can contain nicotine (though not always), flavorings, and other chemicals. They often use a tank or cartridge to hold the liquid and can resemble traditional tobacco cigarettes, cigars, or pipes, or may look very different, such as those that resemble USB memory sticks.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), quitting smoking and vaping improves your health and reduces risk of heart disease, cancer, lung disease, and other smoking-related illnesses. To receive assistance with living a smoke-free life, call 1-800-QUIT-NOW (1-800-784-8669). In Spanish, call 1-800-DEJALO-YA, and in Vietnamese, call 1-800-778-8440.

For more information visit <https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/campaign/tips/quit-smoking/index.html>.