

Fatal Infection

Jason's Story

Jason was a sophomore in high school when he started vaping. He was at a party and all his friends were vaping, so he started taking hits from their devices. The next day he got one of his friends in college to go to the local gas station and buy him a vape of his own. He wasn't 21, or even 18, but he found a way to get his hands on a vape. This would be a fatal mistake. At the end of junior year, Jason was hospitalized for EVALI. EVALI stands for e-cigarette or vaping product use-associated lung injury. Jason was otherwise healthy and had never had lung issues before. His parents were shocked to learn the cause of his sudden illness. They had no idea that he was vaping. Two weeks later, Jason was released from the hospital. Jason was so relieved; he pledged to never pick up a vape again. He urged his friends to stop vaping too, before this would happen to them. Two weeks later, Jason was hospitalized again. This time, he wasn't so lucky. The doctors did everything they could, but they couldn't save him. Jason was too far gone. He died from the infection in his lungs. Although he was only vaping for a short time, the infection was brewing in his lungs, getting stronger every time he took a hit. He didn't know the dangers of vaping. After all, it's better than smoking cigarettes, right?



Test Yourself

Think you know all there is to know about vaping?
Fill in the blanks to find out!

- _____ deaths have even been related to vaping.
- Symptoms of _____ withdrawal include hunger and _____.
- When you try to quit vaping, your body may go through nicotine _____.
- _____ contains nicotine and comes in thousands of flavors.

WORD BANK:

- | | | |
|---------------|------------|--------------|
| A. Nicotine | B. E-juice | C. Confusion |
| D. Withdrawal | E. 57 | |

Answers: 1. E 2. A, C 3. D 4. B



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VAPING



Trapped by Vape

What is Vaping?

You've probably heard of an e-cigarette, a (usually) tobacco-free way of smoking. Vaping is similar. It is the inhalation and exhalation of aerosol, or "vapor." Users often confuse the aerosol for water vapor. This means they are unknowingly inhaling tons of toxic chemicals. These chemicals may cause cancer and other diseases. To use a "vape," a user inhales e-juice, which is heated up by a battery and released through a mouthpiece.

Most vapes contain liquidized propylene glycol or vegetable glycerin, as well as various amounts of nicotine. This is called e-juice. Vapes can also be used to smoke THC (that's the chemical in marijuana that gives you a high feeling) or synthetic drugs. They can contain Flakka, a drug similar to bath salts. DEA intelligence has even reported that fentanyl had been found in unregulated vape cartridges.

Is Vaping Dangerous?

More and more people start vaping every day. Because of this, the number of people in hospitals for lung-related issues is rising, and it's just going to keep rising. As of 2019, Fifty-seven deaths have even been related to vaping. As of January 2020, there have been over two thousand cases of serious lung diseases in people who vape. Some chemicals in vapes have been found as a high risk for cancer.

Vaping doesn't just affect the person vaping; it affects the people around them. There have been cases of accidental consumption of e-juice in children and even adults that led to acute nicotine poisoning. Vaping also harms a growing fetus.

Not only is vaping dangerous because of what it does to your body, it's dangerous because vaping devices are prone to blowing up or catching fire. This is due to defective batteries in the generally cheaply made devices.



Is Vaping Addictive?

Easy answer, yes. Most vaping devices contain nicotine, an extremely addictive chemical that has been found to harm the developing brain. This affects teenagers and young adults the most because their brain has not fully developed yet. Some "Nicotine Free" brands of vapes have been found to contain nicotine. Every time you vape, your body gets more and more used to the nicotine intake. This makes it very hard to quit vaping. When you do try to quit, your brain will send signals to your body that it is not getting what it usually gets. This is nicotine withdrawal, lead by nicotine addiction. Here are some symptoms of nicotine withdrawal.

- Headaches
- Anxiety
- Irritability
- Hunger
- Feeling tired or drowsy
- Feeling jittery
- Mood swings
- Confusion
- Depression or intense sadness
- Feeling like you "need" nicotine



How Do I Quit?

Have you decided to make the change and quit vaping? Here are some helpful tips to help you become vape-free.

Find your reason why. There are plenty of reasons you may want to quit vaping. Make a list of every reason why you are quitting. Maybe write them down and hang it on your fridge or keep it in your cell phone to see when you need it. Keeping yourself motivated will ease this process.

Quit all tobacco products. It may seem scary to quit using all tobacco products at the same time as vaping, but now is the best time to quit it all.

Choose a day. This is the first step to quitting. Pick a date and prepare for that date. Give yourself a good amount of time to get ready, but not too much time to talk yourself out of it.

Prepare yourself for the challenges. You will face withdrawals, temptations, and triggers. It is important to know your triggers so that when you're faced with them, you can resist them.

Picture the vape-free you. Imagine yourself and your future after you quit vaping. Use this vision to motivate you to keep pushing when it gets hard.

Find the support. Build up a team of trustworthy people to help get you through this process. Talk to your friends and family. Consult your doctor. Join a support group. Ask for help. It's out there.

