

Ohio to raise smoking age to 21

COLUMBUS —

Across Ohio the legal purchase age for tobacco and vaping products will increase to 21, up from 18, when Gov. Mike DeWine signs the state budget bill.

The new restriction will apply to anyone who hasn't turned 18 by Oct. 1, 2019 – allowing those who are already between 18 and 21 to continue purchasing tobacco and vaping products.

RELATED: Senate wants to raise smoking age

Officials estimate the change will result in the state foregoing \$39.7 million in tobacco tax money over two years.

Ohio will join several other states, including Illinois, New York, California and Connecticut, that adopted a statewide Tobacco 21 purchase age.

Studies show 95 percent of adult smokers took up the habit before they turned 21. Nearly 21 percent of high school age youths use e-cigarettes, making them more at risk for using regular cigarettes later, according to the Ohio Department of Health.

Smoking increases the risks that the smoker will suffer from cancer, chronic breathing problems, heart disease and strokes. Pregnant women who smoke run the risk of delivering premature or low-birth weight babies – which contributes to Ohio's high rates of infant mortality.

More than 1 in 5 Ohioans smoke and tobacco-related diseases kill far more Ohioans every year than opioids — about 20,180 smoking attributable deaths versus 3,497 opioid overdose deaths in 2016.

This year 5,400 Ohio children will become new daily smokers, according to the American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network.

In 2006, 58.5 percent of Ohio voters said yes to an indoor smoking ban law.

CDC, state health officials investigating link between vaping and severe lung disease

(CNN) — At least 15 states have identified more than 120 cases of lung disease or injury that could be linked to vaping, a CNN survey of state health departments has found. The US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention [said](#) on Saturday it's investigating severe pulmonary disease among people who use e-cigarettes in some states.



States with the most cases include Wisconsin, with 15 confirmed cases and 15 more under investigation, according to CNN's survey. Illinois has 10 confirmed cases, while 12 more are under investigation. California is looking into 19 such cases. The New York State Department of Health said Friday it was "actively investigating" 11 cases. Indiana and New Jersey both reported nine cases, of which Indiana has confirmed six.

Health officials in Connecticut, Florida, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Texas and Utah also said they were aware of confirmed or potential cases. A total of 42 states and Washington, DC, provided CNN with a response.

"These latest reports of pulmonary disease in people using vaping products in New York and other states are proof that more study is needed on the long-term health effects of these products," Dr. Howard Zucker, health commissioner for New York State, said in a [statement](#) Friday.

The CDC said Saturday it had counted 94 possible cases of severe lung illness

associated with vaping in 14 states from June 28 to August 15.



Health officials in multiple states said it is still unclear whether there's a connection between the cases or whether vaping definitively caused these illnesses -- which led to multiple people being hospitalized.

In an [email](#) Friday, the CDC urged doctors to collect information and samples of what similar patients might have been vaping. The agency said it was working with some of these states to share information and facilitate testing. "There are still many unanswered questions, but the health harms emerging from the current epidemic of youth vaping in Minnesota continue to increase," Dr. Ruth Lynfield, the Minnesota Department of Health's medical director and state epidemiologist, said in a [statement](#) Tuesday. "We are encouraging providers and parents to be on the look-out for vaping as a cause for unexplained breathing problems and lung injury and disease."

A tough condition to track

The Minnesota Department of Health reported this week that some patients were hospitalized for "multiple weeks," in some cases ending up in the intensive care unit. They came in with symptoms including shortness of breath, fever, cough, vomiting, diarrhea, headache, dizziness and chest pain.



Dr. Emily Chapman, chief medical officer at Children's Minnesota, which reported four cases, said in a [statement](#) that these illnesses are tricky to diagnose because they can start off looking like a common infection before leading to more serious complications.

They are also tricky to track, experts say, because vaping-related lung disease is not a condition that's mandatory to report. Some health departments said they don't track this data.

Still, states are putting out [notices](#) in hopes that doctors will notice the clues and ask the right questions. In Colorado, Georgia and Kansas, health officials have tried to look for cases by analyzing data from emergency departments.

"There is no diagnostic code ... for lung diseases related to vaping. So it'll be hard to follow and track," said Dr. Humberto Choi, a pulmonologist and critical care specialist at the Cleveland Clinic.



Choi said he has seen three cases himself over the last several months -- and he suspects there were others who didn't think of vaping as a potential cause.

"People had the impression that vaping was something safe," Choi said. "They don't connect new symptoms with vaping."

Choi's state of Ohio, however, is not one of the states where health departments are currently reporting cases, according to the state's health department.

"It's hard to tell what to expect in these cases because it's something new," Choi said.

No clear culprit

Thomas Haupt, a respiratory disease epidemiologist with Wisconsin's Department of Health Services, [told CNN](#) earlier this month that the cases in his state were young people who were "otherwise normally healthy, and they



were coming in with severe respiratory illnesses, and in some cases, they actually had to go to the intensive care unit and were placed on ventilators."

The lung disease initially looked like it was caused by an infection, "but every test has come back completely negative," he added.

Wisconsin's cases were largely in the southeastern part of the state, Haupt said. This borders the northeastern part of Illinois, where that state's initial patients were hospitalized.

While officials are still trying to determine which products patients used, some states -- including Wisconsin, Minnesota and New York -- said the use of both nicotine and marijuana products had been reported.

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In Wisconsin, "all patients reported vaping prior to their hospitalization, but we don't know all the products they used at this time," Andrea Palm, the state's Department of Health Services secretary-designee, said in a [statement](#) last week. "The products used could include a number of substances, including nicotine, THC, synthetic cannabinoids, or a combination of these." Health experts have pointed to a variety of substances in e-liquids they worry may [harm cells](#) or [contain](#) "dangerous chemicals," but the full extent of e-cigarettes' short- and long-term risks are yet unclear. A number of [counterfeit](#) and adulterated products have also hit the market, which may have other additives or ingredients. It is unclear whether that plays a role across these cases.

CNN's Nadia Kounang, Minali Nigam, Jen Christensen, Amanda Watts and Sheena Jones contributed to this report.

Marijuana Damages Young Brains

By Kenneth L. Davis and Mary Jeanne Kreek June 16, 2019

Recent efforts to legalize marijuana in New York and New Jersey have been stalled — but not killed — by disputes over how exactly to divvy up the revenues from marijuana sales and by worries about drugged driving. Those are both important issues. But another concern should be at the center of this debate: the medical implications of legalizing marijuana, particularly for young people.

It's tempting to think marijuana is a harmless substance that poses no threat to teens and young adults. The medical facts, however, reveal a different reality.

Numerous studies show that marijuana can have a [deleterious impact](#) on cognitive development in adolescents, impairing [executive function](#), [processing speed](#), [memory](#), [attention span and concentration](#). The damage is measurable with an I.Q. test. Researchers who tracked subjects from childhood through age 38 found a [consequential I.Q. decline](#) over the 25-year period among adolescents who consistently used marijuana every week. In addition, studies have shown that substantial adolescent exposure to marijuana may be a [predictor of opioid use disorders](#).

The reason the adolescent brain is so vulnerable to the effect of drugs is that the brain — especially the prefrontal cortex, which controls decision making, judgment and impulsivity — is still developing in adolescents and young adults until age 25.

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In addition, researchers now have a good understanding of how marijuana in particular affects the brain. The chemical in marijuana responsible for producing mood elevation and relaxation, THC, interferes with the exchange of information between neurons. Regular exposure to THC in adolescents can permanently change neuropathways that are related to cognition, including learning, attention and emotional responses. In some adolescents, it can also [lead to long-term](#) dependence.

This is why the American Academy of Pediatrics has warned against [both medical and recreational use of marijuana](#) by adolescents. (In adults, some medicinal forms of THC are approved for specific indications, such as nausea caused by cancer chemotherapy. The major nonpsychoactive component of marijuana, CBD, has been medically approved for specific types of epilepsy and other uses.)

The risk that marijuana use poses to adolescents today is far greater than it was 20 or 30 years ago, because the marijuana grown now is much more potent. In the early 1990s, the [average THC content of confiscated marijuana was roughly 3.7 percent](#). By contrast, a recent analysis of marijuana for sale in Colorado's authorized dispensaries showed an [average THC content of 18.7 percent](#).

The proposals for legalizing marijuana under consideration in New York and New Jersey allow for use starting at age 21. While society may consider a 21-year-old to be an adult, the brain is still developing at that age. States that legalize marijuana should set a minimum age of no younger than 25. They should also impose stricter limits on THC levels and strictly monitor them. Educational campaigns are also necessary to help the public understand that marijuana is not harmless.

Simply because society has become more accepting of marijuana use doesn't make it safe for high school and college students. Cigarettes and alcohol, both legal, have caused great harm in society as well as to people's health, and have ruined many lives. Marijuana may do the same. We must tightly regulate the

emerging cannabis industry to protect the developing brain.

Kenneth L. Davis is the president and chief executive of the Mount Sinai Health System. Mary Jeanne Kreek is the head of the Laboratory of the Biology of Addictive Diseases at Rockefeller University.

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'Don't vape. Don't use Juul': Juul CEO issues stark warning to nonsmokers as he admits long-term effects of vaping are unknown

Aug. 29, 2019, 12:31 PM



[CBS This Morning](#)

- [Juul](#) Labs CEO Kevin Burns is warning nonsmokers against using his company's vaping products.
- "Don't vape. Don't use Juul," Burns [told Tony Dokoupil on "CBS This](#)

Morning."

- He also said it was true that the long-term health effects of vaping are unknown.
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Juul Labs CEO Kevin Burns issued a stark warning to nonsmokers about the company's vaping products.

"Don't vape. Don't use Juul," Juul CEO Kevin Burns [told Tony Dokoupil in an interview](#) that aired Thursday on "CBS This Morning."

"Don't start using nicotine if you don't have a preexisting relationship with nicotine," he said. "Don't use the product. You're not our target consumer."

Burns also said it was true that the long-term effects of vaping are unknown.

When asked how he could sell vaping products with no knowledge of the long-term effects, Burns said, "We think we have a product that is legal today, is tested for toxicity, and does not present, you know, a risk based on the guidelines of the category today to the American public."

In response to a question about whether Juul products are toxic, he said, "We do toxicology testing on all of our products."

[Read more: Officials are investigating more than 200 cases of serious lung disease tied to vaping. Here are the other health risks you should know about.](#)

Burns previously [apologized to parents of kids](#) addicted to the company's vaping products.

Juul is pushing a new checkout system to curb sales to minors

In an effort to curb sales of its products to minors, Juul on Wednesday said it

planned to offer incentives to retailers to install a new electronic age-verification system at the point of sale, [The Wall Street Journal reported](#).

Juul will stop selling to any retailer that hasn't adopted the system by May 2021, Burns told The Journal.

[Read more: 'I go crazy if I don't have it': American teens are going wild over an addictive e-cigarette developed by Stanford graduates](#)

The [Food and Drug Administration](#) has called teen vaping an "[epidemic](#)." Juul has been [accused](#) of [marketing](#) its dessert-flavored e-cigarettes on platforms [popular among young people](#), including YouTube, Twitter, and Instagram.

Increased scrutiny of teen vaping has led some retailers, such as [Rite Aid](#) and [Walmart](#), to pull the products from stores. Rite Aid stopped selling e-cigarettes altogether, while Walmart has [stopped selling](#) dessert-flavored vaping products.

Juul is partially owned by [Altria](#), the tobacco giant behind [Marlboro](#).

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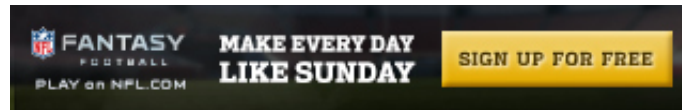
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Posted: 6:38 a.m. Thursday, Aug. 8, 2013

Smokers cost your boss an extra \$5,816 each



By Joe Kelley

News965.com

Smokers in your office are costing your employer an extra \$5,816 per year for each smoker compared to nonsmoking employees. That's the conclusion following an analysis of data collected from previous studies of smoking-related costs.

The research, conducted at Ohio State University, estimates that the largest cost for employers is related to work that does not get done when a smoker takes a smoke break. That cost alone is estimated to add \$3,077 annually for each smoker compared to a non-smoker.

Smokers, on average, take about five smoke breaks during a typical work day. Most non-smokers, by comparison, take only three work breaks.

The [NY Times blog](#) has additional details from the [study](#):

The second largest cost, at \$2,056, was related to excess health care expenses. Smokers typically have more health problems than nonsmokers, including heart and lung disease and various cancers.

The remaining costs came from increased absenteeism — the researchers found that smokers miss about two-and-a-half extra workdays each year — and lost productivity at work, perhaps because of nicotine’s withdrawal effects. The findings appeared online in June in the journal Tobacco Control.

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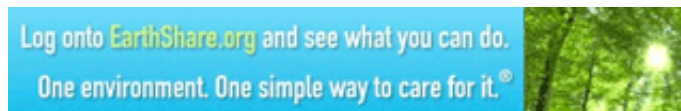
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