



Concerning Our Health

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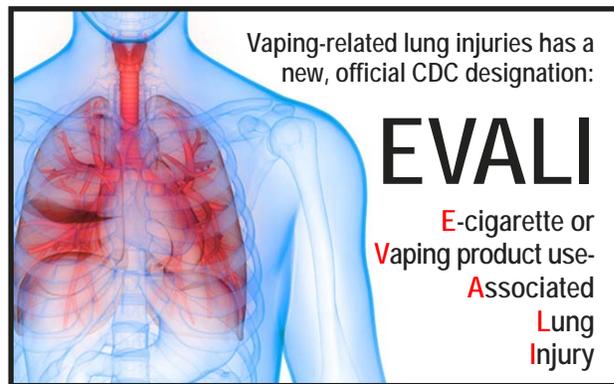
Provider Assistance Needed Reporting Vaping-related Illnesses

The case count of vaping-related lung injuries and resulting deaths rose notably throughout summer and fall, accompanied by ensuing media attention. As of November 4, there were 2,051 confirmed and probable lung injury cases from 49 states, the District of Columbia (DC) and 1 territory, and 39 deaths confirmed in 24 states and DC. In New York State, there have been 98 confirmed and probable lung injury cases, 64 reports under investigation and 1 death. Characteristics of the multistate outbreak have been described by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in multiple issues of *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report*. In mid-October the CDC officially coined the new term “EVALI” for E-cigarette or Vaping product use-Associated Lung Injury. **As investigations continue, physicians in New York are being asked to report cases of potential lung injury with a history of using e-cigarettes or other vaping products to the Upstate New York Poison Center in at 1-800-222-1222.**

Symptoms of vaping-associated lung injury include: shortness of breath, cough, chest pain, fever, nausea, and vomiting. If the patient presents with these symptoms, especially in individuals without a history of respiratory illness but with vaping within the past 90 days, providers should obtain a detailed history. (See box at right.)

Health professionals also have an important role to play in educating patients to stem this public health epidemic. Pediatricians and family medicine doctors in particular can learn about the different devices and types of e-cigarettes, and

when asking patients if they smoke, can directly ask if they vape. In addition, counseling on the risks of all forms of tobacco product use, including e-cigarettes, make good preventive steps. An update to your patient questionnaire



and/or EMR can help facilitate this expanded question and counseling. Referral to a quit or tobacco reduction program is also important. **Research has repeatedly shown that simple, brief advice, has improved tobacco quit rates for adults.** Free help for patients is available at www.smokefree.gov or by calling the NYS Quitline at 1-866-NY-QUITTS.

A detailed patient history will be requested by the Upstate New York Poison Center when a physician calls. The following questions recommended by the New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH) will be asked.

- > What substances or flavorings were used?
- > What type of e-cigarettes or vaping products were used (e.g. manufacturer, product name, model, etc.)?
- > Were any modifications made to the device, either as intended by manufacturer or by personal design?
- > Types of substances and where obtained (commercially available liquids in bottles, cartridges, or pods, etc., homemade liquids, typically involving the re-use of old cartridges or pods).
- > Where did purchase(s) occur?
- > Describe method of substance use (e.g., vaping, dabbing, dripping, etc.)?
- > Were any devices or substances shared with others?
- > Can the patient provide any remaining substance(s) and/or devices for testing? (Poison Center staff, in coordination with the NYSDOH, can assist in determining the need for product testing. They will provide instructions on where samples can be sent. If a health care facility is unable to hold the sample, it should be maintained with the patient until chain of custody can be established.)

Further information: www.health.ny.gov/press/releases/2019/2019-11-08_vaping.htm

Public Health Responds to the Vaping Epidemic

Due to recent illnesses and deaths and the heightened media attention, vaping has emerged as a growing public health threat. Health officials in Putnam, New York State and the country have been fighting back with investigations, legislation, regulation and public information. On September 16, the CDC activated its emergency operations center. This move enhances the inter-agency response and support for current health research on a national level. In New York, the first state in the country to declare a flavor ban, other regulatory edicts include the posting of warning signs in retail establishments. This legislation has been stalled in the court system as opposition has been raised. Good local news however, came earlier this fall with regulation results from the enactment of Tobacco 21 in Putnam County. Retailers are adhering to this new legislation that makes it illegal to

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A Message from the Commissioner of Health

Chronic diseases impose a huge burden on society, and the largest preventable cause of these diseases is tobacco use. While progress has been made in reducing tobacco addiction, now we face another challenge—electronic cigarettes and vaping—and our youth are most at risk.

More than 85 percent of adults who use tobacco daily today started by the age of 18, continuing the habit throughout their lives, leading to poor health and multiple chronic diseases.

Another major chronic disease burden facing Putnam is the growing number of residents at risk or currently with diabetes. We are intent on working with our partners to ensure services are available and accessible to all, and will continue to keep you informed about the health of our community.

— Michael J. Nesheiwat, MD

Public Health Responds to Vaping Epidemic, *continued from front page.*

sell tobacco, nicotine and vaping products to anyone under the age of 21. Research shows that most lifetime tobacco users start smoking before the age of 21. **Early tobacco initiation during young adulthood comes with a high probability of addiction, progression to daily smoking, and heavier tobacco use in adulthood, and has long-term harmful health consequences.** This is why this legislation is so important. Compliance checks were conducted by health department staff working closely with community partners at The Prevention Council of Putnam, in addition to the ongoing regulatory checks performed under the longstanding ATUPA program, so named after the Adolescent Tobacco Use Prevention Act.

Meanwhile other chronic disease prevention partners at the American Lung Association (ALA) in Putnam County have introduced a new program in schools hoping also to take aim and stop tobacco addiction from becoming a lifelong long habit. High schools and middle schools have become “ground zero” for the vaping epidemic. Nearly all tobacco use begins in youth and according to local data, 24.6 percent of Putnam youth report vaping in the past 30 days. An innovative new

program called INDEPTH (Intervention for Nicotine Dependence: Education, Prevention, Tobacco and Health) has been developed to tackle youth vaping in schools where it has become a true epidemic. By offering students four short educational sessions as an alternative to suspension or citation, this program holds great promise for increasing quit readiness. With free training for facilitators, the ALA and other health advocates are hoping that the process to implement this program in schools will be accelerated.

Health Commissioner Michael J. Nesheiwat, MD, has also been working with representatives from a countywide Task Force entitled “One Army in the War on Addiction,” currently being led by former Putnam County Legislator Barbara Scuccimarra. The Task Force, formally launched in the spring of 2018 to look at policy and prevention, is now investigating ways to reduce youth vaping in Putnam County schools. Membership includes local government leaders, public health officials, substance abuse prevention and treatment professionals and law enforcement.

Can Ten Questions Predict Future Health?

The ACE assessment, sometimes called a quiz or questionnaire, examines ten possible childhood experiences. The questions can be broken down into three broad groups: abuse (emotional, physical, sexual); neglect (physical and emotional); and household dysfunction (mental illness, prison, substance use, separated or divorced parents, domestic violence). **These questions assess risk factors that are dose-dependent: the more affirmative “yes” answers tallied, the higher the risk of both physical and emotional health challenges later in life.**

However, the original ACE assessment alone does not tell the whole story. Not all traumatic events are included, and genetic influences and individual resilience, both play a role. While the science in genetics and resilience is rapidly evolving, doctors and nurses in pediatric clinical settings, as well as mental health providers, are asking parents and caregivers about these issues. When making behaviorally-related diagnoses, some providers are already utilizing a trauma-informed approach, moving beyond “conventional ACEs,” and considering wider ranges of early and ongoing experiences. ACE awareness is increasing in schools too. Social workers and counselors are being trained to think more routinely about these childhood experiences. One of the greatest attributes of an ACE assessment and awareness, is the improvement in family and community foundations. This process lays a road map to improving health equity by addressing the social determinants of health.

New CDC Report Quantifies ACE Burden
Overall, 60.9 % of adults experienced at least 1 ACE and, nearly 1 in 6 adults have an ACE score of 4 or higher. Preventing these experiences could reduce a number of future health risks, ranging from 1.7 % reduction in obesity to 44.1 % reduction in depression.

Source: Merrick MT, Ford DC, Ports KA, et al. *Vital Signs: Estimated Proportion of Adult Health Problems Attributable to Adverse Childhood Experiences and Implications for Prevention—25 States, 2015–2017.*
DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.15585/mmwr.mm6844e1>

Adults Need Immunizations too!

The Putnam County Department of Health hosted the 19th Annual Mid-Hudson Adult Immunization Coalition Meeting on October 18 at Centennial Golf Club. Nearly 80 health care providers and public health professionals attended the event, hosted by the New York State Association of County Health Officials, to hear about the latest efforts to keep adults fully immunized.

Supervising Public Health Nurse Kathleen Percacciolo, RN, BSN, served as moderator for the day, joining Putnam County Health Commissioner Michael J. Nesheiwat, MD, and Dutchess County Commissioner of Behavioral and Community Health, Anil K. Vaidian, MD, MPH, who presented opening and closing remarks respectively. Lewis Kohl, DO, MBA, CareMount Medical's Chief Medical Information Officer and Medical Director, led a lively discussion after describing how CareMount has been implementing the secure, statewide web-based immunization information

registry through their large network of providers, which cares for approximately 700,000 patients.

Other speakers included Jane R. Zucker, MD, MSc, Assistant Commissioner, Bureau of Immunization from the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, who recapped the recent New



From left, Lewis Kohl, MD; Michael J. Nesheiwat, MD, and Anil Vaidian, MD, MPH, were among the speakers at the 19th Annual Mid-Hudson Adult Immunization Conference on October 18.

York City measles outbreak that began last year, and Thomas P. Lemme, PA-C, MA, MBA, a project manager from IPRO, one of the nation's largest healthcare quality evaluation organizations, who spoke about the Quality Payment Program (QPP) as it relates to adult immunizations. **All speakers stressed the importance of immunizations for adults, not just for children.**

Putnam County, which had remained on the sidelines of the recent outbreaks in New York City and Rockland County, announced confirmation of its first measles case of 2019 on October 1.

- > **Measles Recap in Putnam**
- 1 case confirmed
 - 0 secondary cases
 - 121 contact investigations
 - 3 local venues with measles exposure
 - First outbreak of 2019, 9/21 to 11/9

Physicians Prevent Diabetes with STAT and NDPP

A staggering 56 percent of Putnam's population are either at risk of developing diabetes or already have it. Physician intervention and referral for individuals at risk can make all the difference. Simply put, prediabetes is reversible. The numbers of Putnam County residents with elevated blood glucose levels have grown alongside the nationwide obesity epidemic. In New York State more than two million people—12.5 percent of the population—already have diabetes, but with intervention and lifestyle change these numbers do not have to rise.

The STAT toolkit (Screen, Test, Act Today) has been developed by the American Medical Association (AMA) and the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) to offer hope to growing numbers of prediabetes patients. Integral to STAT is the third piece: Act Today. This means referring to an evidence-based national diabetes prevention program (NDPP). In Putnam, a NDPP program called Prevent T2 is offered FREE to patients by Putnam Independent Living Services (PILS). With the assistance from trained coaches and a curriculum developed by the CDC, the group meets weekly for the first 20 weeks and then less frequently for the next six months. Learning to eat healthier without giving up favorite foods, adding physical activity to one's life, and dealing with stress are some of the changes the program helps participants make. One location for the program is at the PILS office, at 1441 Route 22, Suite 204, in Brewster.

Program requirements:

- > 18 years of age or older
- > BMI of 25 or greater; 23 or greater if Asian (American Diabetes Association criteria)
- > No previous diagnosis of diabetes
- > A blood test result in prediabetes range within past year. Either:
 - Hemoglobin A1C (5.7% to 6.4%), OR
 - Fasting plasma glucose (100 to 125 mg/dL); OR
 - 2-hour plasma glucose (after 75 gm glucose load) 140 to 199 mg/dL

Referrals:

Physician referral forms are available online. Visit the PILS website:

www.putnamils.org/diabetes-prevention-program/#

Scroll down to the bottom link: [Health Care Provider Referral Form_11.13.18](#) or

Direct link: www.putnamils.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/4/2018/11/Health.Care_.Provider.Referral.Form_11.13.18.pdf

Self-referrals are accepted as well. Patients can log on to the PILS website for a link or access the online prediabetes risk test from the CDC and the American Diabetes Association at:

www.cdc.gov/prediabetes/takethetest/

For more information:

Prevent T2 program at PILS: Lonna Kelly, 845-228-7457, Ext. 1110.

STAT toolkit (patient engagement materials, NDPP research, etc.) visit: <http://www.preventdiabetesstat.org>

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Spotlight: Free Newborn and Postpartum Services from the PCDOH

Postpartum home-visits from a registered nurse are free and available to Putnam county residents after the birth of a child. Referrals to the Maternal-Child Health (MCH) program are accepted from hospitals or doctors, as well as directly from a mother of a newborn or her family.

MCH nurses work directly with families to ensure they are receiving reliable information and guidance on topics such as breastfeeding, immunizations, postpartum depression or anxiety screening, and infant growth and development. Specialized nurses provide lactation support, conduct infant weight checks, and more.

In addition to homecare services, nurses and breastfeeding educators facilitate groups for parents, caregivers and newborns to come together in a safe and supportive environment.

By building confidence in parenting skills, developing social networks, and gaining access to relevant information on infant and postpartum health, parents of new babies are able to acclimate to changes often as challenging as they are rewarding. Research indicates that first-time

parent groups provide lasting benefits not only for families, but also for society as a whole—and MCH nurses witness this firsthand.

Despite often being viewed as home to an aging population, Putnam County welcomed 798 babies in 2017! Learn more about our MCH programs online: <https://www.putnamcountyny.com/health/child/> or call 845-808-1390.



Baby and Me Groups—These are open to moms, dads and other caregivers of infants to ask questions and share information on topics ranging from breastfeeding to sleep training. All are under the guidance of a registered nurse and/or an experienced postpartum doula.

Tuesdays 11am-1pm
Desmond Fish Library, 472 Route 403,
Garrison, NY 10524
(Please use the side entrance to the library.)

Wednesdays 1:30pm-3:30pm
Mahopac Library, 668 Route 6,
Mahopac, NY 10541

Lactation Support Group—These are offered to all breastfeeding mothers who would like to learn more about breastfeeding or receive lactation counseling in a supportive environment.

Second and Fourth Fridays 11:00am-1:00pm
Pataki Conference Center
NYP Hudson Valley Hospital
1992 Crompond Rd, Cortlandt, NY 10567



Find the Maternal Child Nurses online at
www.facebook.com/putnamparents/