

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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SAFE Glen Cove Coalition: Marijuana Smoke Harms Lungs in Tobacco Smokers

According to the American Lung Association (ALA) a preliminary study published in the Radiological Society of North America concluded that Smoking marijuana while being a tobacco smoker may increase damage to the respiratory system.

The Study compared chest scans from 56 people who smoked marijuana and tobacco with lung scans of 33 people who had been heavy cigarette smokers for over 25 years. Scans from an additional 57 nonsmokers with no preexisting lung disease, chemotherapy or other history of lung damage were used as a control group. 75% of the people in the study who smoked marijuana and tobacco had emphysema, a disease of the small airways that causes damage to the air sacs in the lungs. About 67% of the tobacco-only smokers had emphysema, while only 5% of the nonsmokers had the disease.

There's a public perception that marijuana is safer than tobacco, and this study raises concern this may not be true as it suggests that marijuana has additional effects on the lungs than tobacco alone. Another recent study had similar findings whereby cannabis users were 22% more likely than nonusers to visit an emergency department or be hospitalized. It also revealed teens are about twice as likely to report "wheezing or whistling" in the chest after vaping marijuana than after smoking cigarettes or using e-cigarettes A difference of 8 percentage points between marijuana plus tobacco and tobacco-only smokers may not seem like a huge difference, but it was significant enough to warrant concern. Another concern was the age of the marijuana smokers — many were much younger than 50.

The researchers maintain patients had less lifetime exposure to smoke, except they're even sicker than those who are heavy tobacco smokers and have been doing it longer. It is difficult to ascertain whether these outcomes are a result of a synergistic effect between the marijuana and the tobacco versus the marijuana alone. However, there are several differences in how marijuana and tobacco are consumed and that could provide clues for further investigation. For example, tobacco is typically smoked with a filter, while marijuana is not.

The ALA firmly believes that the only thing that should go into your lungs is clean air, so if you're inhaling anything, it could potentially be toxic to your lungs.

For help Quitting smoking or vaping or to help a loved beat a Nicotine Addiction please visit the American Lung Association on their Website at: www.americanlung.org.

The New York State Smokers' Quitline assists thousands of New Yorkers every year in their attempts to break free from smoking and other tobacco and the service is free and confidential. Call 1-866-NYQUITS (1-866-697-8487) or visit them at: <https://www.nysmokefree.com/>.for Quit Help.

SAFE, Inc. is the only alcohol and substance abuse prevention, intervention, and education agency in the City of Glen Cove. Its Coalition is concerned about marijuana, tobacco use and vaping, seeking to educate and update the community regarding its negative consequences in collaboration with Carol Meschkow, Manager- Tobacco Action Coalition of Long Island. To learn more about the SAFE Glen Cove Coalition please follow us on www.facebook.com/safeglencovecoalition or visit the Vaping Facts and Myths Page of SAFE's website to learn more about how vaping is detrimental to your health www.safeglencove.org.