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### **SAFE Glen Cove Coalition: More Research is Emerging on the Dangers of Vaping**

A recent article in the New York Times discussed a new study that found high levels of heavy metals in popular nicotine vapes adds to concerns about the products.

When vapes started to become popular in the mid-2010s, the tiny cartridges were presented as a healthier alternative to cigarettes and a path to quit smoking. Researchers are now coming to understand the hazards of vapes themselves. In recent study, a team of scientists analyzed the mist from popular vapes and found such high levels of heavy metals that one researcher thought their machine had malfunctioned. Other studies have suggested that vaping can affect the heart, lungs and brain.

Data on the long-term health effects is limited, because vapes are relatively new and constantly evolving. Many people who use them are in their teens or 20s; it might take a while before further effects become apparent. Consumers also often use both cigarettes and vapes, which makes it difficult to isolate harm from vaping alone. Vaping is still less common than cigarette use among U.S. adults, 4.5 percent of whom said they vaped in 2021. Nearly 8 percent of high school students reported vaping in the last month in a 2024 survey.

Regardless, superheated chemicals inhaled directly into your lungs can't be healthy. Research is increasingly pointing to the reality that while vapes do not contain the same dangerous chemicals as cigarettes, they come with their own harms.

#### **Cardiovascular Concerns**

A hit from a vape immediately stresses the cardiovascular system. Your heart rate rises and your blood vessels constrict, which can stiffen arteries in the heart over time. When you vape all day long, repeatedly and over again — you're basically walking around with high blood pressure. These effects could raise the risk of developing an irregular heart rhythm, stroke and even a heart attack.

When vapes heat liquids to higher temperatures, they can release larger amounts of harmful chemicals that can seep into the lungs, enter the bloodstream and lungs. The liquids in e-cigarettes can release known carcinogens, like formaldehyde and acetaldehyde, when heated. These and other chemicals can damage blood vessels, drive inflammation and contribute to cardiovascular disease risk.

When people quit vaping, they can also experience nicotine withdrawal that can increase heart rate and blood pressure.

## Lung Issues

Vaping causes inflammation in the airways and lungs that can become chronic. It can also exacerbate asthma and symptoms of chronic obstructive pulmonary disease and can lead to a persistent cough and shortness of breath.

While researchers have yet to determine whether vapes cause cancer, which can take decades to develop, they do know that vapes can expose users to substances associated with increased cancer risk. Testing of three popular disposable vape brands found that they released high levels of nickel and antimony, heavy metals linked to lung cancer as vapes release large amounts of lead, a neurotoxin.

Chemicals used in flavored vapes, especially disposable ones, can also damage cell membranes, which increases the risk of lung damage and cancer, as well as heart disease.

In rare cases, patients have developed lung scarring and breathing issues known as “popcorn lung” after inhaling diacetyl, a compound in some flavored vapes. (Major vape brands currently say they do not use diacetyl.) In 2019, an outbreak of serious lung injuries, including 68 deaths, was linked to vapes that contained vitamin E acetate.

## Oral Health

As with cigarettes, pouches and other products that contain nicotine, vapes limit blood flow to the gums, which makes them more vulnerable to disease and infection. Nicotine can also damage gum tissue.

## Addiction

Research has shown that e-cigarettes are addictive. Dependence can be especially problematic for adolescents whose brains are developing. There are still some support programs for quitting, and smoking cessation medications may offer relief. But it can also be an agonizing process, bringing on withdrawal symptoms like depression, anxiety and irritation.

Compounding those concerns: Even more addictive vapes that contain higher levels of nicotine are hitting the market. It is now easy to find vapes that have 20,000 puffs of nicotine — an amount rivaling 100 packs of cigarettes.

If your child or a youth you know is ready to quit the habit the State offers program to help. “Drop the Vape” is a New York State-specific free and anonymous text messaging program, designed by the Truth Initiative, and created with input from teens, college students, and young adults who have attempted to, or successfully, quit vaping.

New York State youth, ages 13-17, and young adults, ages 18-24, can text DropTheVape to 88709 to sign up to receive age-appropriate supportive and motivating text messages to support quit efforts. Enrollees in the program receive interactive daily text messages tailored to their sign-up date or their target quit date if they set one. Those without a quit date receive messages for at least one month. Program users who set a quit date (which they can change) receive messages for at least one week prior to the quit date and for at least two months following the quit date. Drop the Vape also directs users to the New York State Quitline\_ for free and confidential quit

coaching via telephone, internet, and text, and free starter kits of nicotine replacement therapy (NRT) for eligible New Yorkers.

For help young people can join by texting “DropTheVape” to 88709.

Keep aware, stay informed and avoid unhealthy behaviors. “Live SAFE “. The SAFE Glen Cove Coalition works diligently to protect youth and inform parents through prevention education to avoid the negative consequence of nicotine addiction.

SAFE, Inc. is the only alcohol and substance abuse prevention, intervention, and education agency in the City of Glen Cove. The Coalition is concerned about all combustible and electronic products with marijuana and tobacco and youth consumption. The Agency employs environmental strategies to educate and update the community regarding the negative consequences. To learn more about the SAFE Glen Cove Coalition please follow [www.facebook.com/safeglencovecoalition](http://www.facebook.com/safeglencovecoalition) or to learn more about electronic products 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](http://www.safeglencove.org).