

# HEALTH BULLETIN

## Don't Vape! It Is Causing Lung Injuries

Using an electronic cigarette (e-cigarette) is commonly called vaping. It can be used to inhale substances like nicotine and THC or CBD oils. **An outbreak of lung injuries from vaping is being reported across the country, but the exact causes remain unknown.**



### Symptoms of Lung Injury Reported by Patients

Patients have reported symptoms such as:

- **Cough, shortness of breath, or chest pain**
- **Nausea, vomiting, abdominal pain, or diarrhea**
- **Fatigue, fever, or weight loss**



- Symptoms may last from a few days to several weeks.
- If you have used e-cigarettes and have these symptoms, call your doctor right away!

### IMPORTANT

- Do not use e-cigarette or vaping products.
- If you vape because you quit cigarette smoking, DON'T return to smoking cigarettes.



**If you have questions about the harmful effects from vaping, call the Poison Control Center at: 1-800-222-1222.**



### IN THIS ISSUE:

|                                   | Page |
|-----------------------------------|------|
| Vaping                            | 1    |
| Preventing Hep A                  | 1    |
| Winter Health Safety              | 2    |
| Falls Among Older Adults          | 2    |
| Flu Season                        | 3    |
| Norovirus                         | 3    |
| Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD) | 4    |
| National Diabetes Month           | 4    |

## Preventing Hepatitis A (Hep A)

**Hep A is a very contagious liver infection caused by the Hepatitis A virus.** It can range from a mild to severe illness lasting several months. Hep A is usually a short-term infection and does not become permanent. It can cause death in some people. **Symptoms usually appear in 2 to 6 weeks and can include:**

- Extreme tiredness and fever
- Stomach pain, vomiting, diarrhea
- Joint pain
- Loss of appetite
- Gray stools
- Jaundice (yellow skin and eyes)

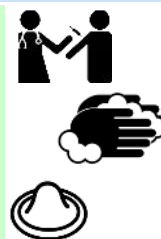
### How is Hep A spread?

- Germs from poop (even in tiny amounts you can't see)
- Sharing needles or drugs
- Having sex with someone who has Hep A
- Eating contaminated food



### How can I protect myself?

- Get the Hepatitis A shot (vaccine) at your doctor's office, hospital or clinic
- Wash your hands with soap and water after going to the bathroom
- Use condoms



**If you don't have insurance, contact a city health center:**

<https://www.phila.gov/services/mental-physical-health/city-health-centers/>



## Winter Health Safety



- ⇒ Our area can get heavy snow, sleet and extreme cold.
- ⇒ Winter weather can cause power outages and affect our health.
- ⇒ Follow these tips to help prevent injuries this winter:



- **Have your chimney, flue and air ducts inspected each year.**
- **Test the batteries in your smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors every month.** Replace the batteries every 6 months.
- **Stock emergency supplies in an easy-to-reach place in your home.** Include things you would need during a power outage:
  - Flashlights and extra batteries
  - Warm clothing and blankets
  - A battery-powered or wind-up radio
  - Non-perishable food
- **Stock emergency supplies in your car.** Include things you would need if your car gets stuck or breaks down. Don't forget a phone charger!
- **DON'T overload electrical outlets or extension cords.**
- **Be careful when you shovel snow.**
  - Warm up your muscles first with some light activities.
  - Push snow rather than lifting it.
  - Bend your knees and use your legs when you can.
  - Wear layers to remove as you get warm.
  - Stay hydrated and take breaks.
- **Always use generators outdoors and at least 20 feet from windows, doors and vents.** Fatal levels of carbon monoxide can be produced in minutes.
- **DON'T leave space heaters unattended.**
- **Keep indoor and outdoor walkways clear for first responders.** Keep cords and other tripping hazards out of the way.
- **Keep phone numbers and medical information handy.**

## Falls Among Older Adults

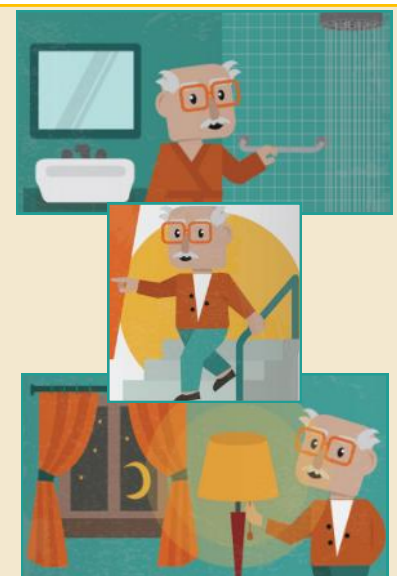
- ⇒ Each year, one in every three adults age 65 and older falls.
- ⇒ Falls can cause hip fractures and head injuries.
- ⇒ They can also increase the risk of an early death.



### How Can Older Adults Prevent Falls?



- **Exercise.** Do exercises that focus on leg strength and balance. Tai Chi programs are a good example.
- **Review your medicine.** Ask your doctor to review your prescription and over-the-counter medicines. Ask which ones may cause dizziness or drowsiness. Advil and Tylenol are examples of over-the-counter medicines.
- **Have your eyes checked.** Visit your eye doctor at least once a year and get your eyeglasses updated.
- **Make your home safe.** Add grab bars inside and outside the tub or shower and next to the toilet. Add stair railings and make sure all areas in your home are well-lit.



Source: [www.SeniorCareAdvice.com](http://www.SeniorCareAdvice.com)

## Flu season runs from October to May.

*During this time, there are outbreaks of the flu (influenza).*

The flu is a contagious respiratory illness. It can cause mild to severe illness and, at times, can lead to death.

Every flu season is different, and the flu can affect people differently. Every flu season millions of people get the flu, hundreds of thousands of people are hospitalized, and thousands of people die from flu-related causes.

### Typical symptoms of the flu:

- Fever
- Stuffy or runny nose
- Dry cough
- Chills
- Sore throat
- Headaches
- Tiredness or weakness
- Body aches



**The flu can be very dangerous for young children, the elderly and people who are sick or have compromised immune systems. In the United States, seasonal flu leads to over 20,000 deaths every year.**

**Seasonal flu vaccines are recommended for everyone 6 months of age and older.** It's the best way to protect yourself from getting very ill. It also helps ensure that you won't pass the virus on to someone who's even more vulnerable to it. **Remember, you can't get the flu from the vaccine.** Sometimes vaccines can cause rare side effects like pain at the injection site.

**Get your seasonal flu shot.**  
**It's quick and easy!**  
**You can:**

- ◇ Make an appointment with your healthcare provider.
- ◇ Go to a pharmacy that gives shots.
- ◇ Visit a community flu clinic or health center.
- ◇ Find sites with walk-in flu shot hours at <http://bit.ly/CityHealthCenters>



## Norovirus is a very contagious virus. It's often called the "stomach bug."

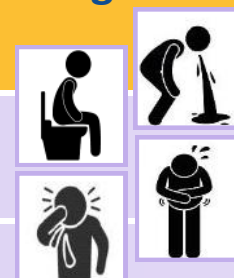
*Prevent the "stomach bug" this winter.*

### Symptoms include:

- Vomiting
- Headache
- Chills
- Stomach cramps
- Diarrhea
- Nausea
- Low-grade fever
- Tiredness or weakness

### How is norovirus spread:

- Direct contact with the virus
- Contact with contaminated surfaces
- Eating or drinking contaminated food or drinks



### How to prevent norovirus:

- ◇ Wash your hands frequently with soap and water, especially:
  - ⇒ After going to the bathroom
  - ⇒ After changing diapers
  - ⇒ Before preparing food
- ◇ Wash fruits and vegetables thoroughly.
- ◇ Cook seafood thoroughly.
- ◇ Clean commonly-touched surfaces with a mix of 1 1/2 cups of bleach per gallon of water.
- ◇ Stay home when you are sick.
- ◇ Stay hydrated (drink lots of water).
- ◇ Be careful handling clothing with vomit or diarrhea on it:
  - ⇒ Wear protective gloves.
  - ⇒ Wash and dry clothes on hot cycle.

## What is Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD)?

- SAD is a type of depression that affects you during the same season each year.
- If you get depressed in winter but feel a lot better in spring and summer, you may have SAD.



### If you have SAD, you may:

- Sleep more and feel drowsy during the day.
- Lose interest in your usual activities.
- Eat more and crave carbohydrates, such as bread and pasta.
- Gain weight.
- Have a hard time concentrating.
- Feel hopeless or guilty.
- Feel sad, grumpy, moody, or anxious.



**Contact your doctor if you have any of these symptoms.**

### Treatment

- Your symptoms usually will get better on their own when a new season arrives, often in the spring or summer.
- But treatments can make you feel better sooner, and some can help keep SAD from coming back.
- **Treatment for SAD may include:** Light therapy, medications and psychotherapy.



**Helpful Tip:** ➡ Get outside each day for at least a short time in winter, especially on sunny days!

## November is National Diabetes Month



This November, communities are focusing on the link between **diabetes and cardiovascular disease**.



**Diabetes is a common disease. Adults with diabetes are nearly twice as likely to die from heart disease or stroke as people without diabetes.** This is because over time, high blood glucose from diabetes can damage your blood vessels and the nerves that control your heart.



### **GOOD NEWS:**

The steps you take to manage your diabetes can help lower your chances of having heart disease or a stroke!



- Stop smoking or using other tobacco products.
- Manage your A1C, blood pressure, and cholesterol levels.
- Develop and maintain healthy lifestyle habits.
- Be more physically active and learn ways to manage stress.
- Take medicines as prescribed by your doctor.



*Source: National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases*



**TAKE DIABETES TO HEART**  
Linking Diabetes and Cardiovascular Disease

### **SIGN UP FOR OUR LISTSERV TODAY!**

The **PDPH Health Bulletin listserv** is used to email information about upcoming events, seminars, trainings, exercises and funding opportunities involving public health and emergency preparedness. To sign up for the listserv, visit [Bit.ly/HealthBulletinSignUp](https://bit.ly/HealthBulletinSignUp).