



Public Health

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Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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DATE: April 3, 2014

HEADLINE: Increase in E-cigarette-related Calls to Poison Centers

LEWISTON, IDAHO – Public Health – Idaho North Central District would like to call your attention to data released today by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) that show calls to poison centers involving e-cigarettes rose from one per month in September 2010 to 215 per month in February 2014. The study compared total monthly calls involving e-cigarettes with those involving conventional cigarettes.

Other key findings include:

- Poison centers reported 2,405 e-cigarette and 16,248 cigarette exposure calls from September 2010 to February 2014.
- E-cigarette calls as a proportion of total calls involving e-cigarettes and cigarettes rose dramatically – jumping from 0.3% in September 2010 to 41.7% in February 2014.
- E-cigarette calls were more likely than cigarette calls to report an adverse health effect following exposure. The most common adverse health effects mentioned in e-cigarette calls were vomiting, nausea, and eye irritation.
- 51.1% of e-cigarette-related poisonings were among young children 0-5 years, while 42% of the poison calls involved adults age 20 and older.
- Poisoning from conventional cigarettes is generally due to young children eating them. Poisoning from e-cigarettes involves the liquid containing nicotine used in the device and can occur three ways: by ingestion, inhalation or absorption through the skin or eyes.

The total number of poisoning cases is likely higher than reflected in this study, because all exposures may not have been reported to poison centers. E-cigarette experimentation has rapidly increased in recent years. A previous CDC study found that e-cigarette experimentation doubled among middle and high school students between 2011 and 2012, with nearly 2 million youth trying the products in 2012.

Health-care providers; the public health community; e-cigarette manufacturers, distributors, sellers, and marketers; and the public should be aware that e-cigarettes have the potential to cause acute adverse health effects and represent an emerging public health concern.

The FDA has not approved e-cigarettes as an effective method to help smokers quit. The U.S. Public Health Service has found that the seven therapies approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration in combination with individual, group or phone cessation counseling is the most effective way to help smokers quit.

If poisoning is suspected call the Poison Control Center immediately at 1-800-222-1222.

For more information on cessation, please contact Heidi Henson, Public Health – Idaho North Central District at 208-799-3100 or visit our website at www.idahopublichealth.com.