



Q&A: DR. BANZON DISCUSSES VAPING

Vaping has been in the news recently, following a study that linked vaping to more than 350 deaths. Vaping, which is the same as Juuling or using e-cigarettes, places a liquid into an aerosol tube that then the user inhales. Because of this study, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has activated an emergency response center and Delaware Division of Public Health is now actively working to spread information about the dangers of vaping.

Q: WHY ARE WE JUST HEARING ABOUT THE HEALTH REPERCUSSIONS OF VAPING?

DR. BANZON: Vaping pens and other vaping materials started coming on the market around 2007; however, at the time, there were no studies on the effects. The Surgeon's General released a warning about vaping as early as 2008, but the first major study was not released until September 2019 when it was published in the New England Journal of Medicine. Following multiple reports of pulmonary disease reported by patients who also vaped or used e-cigarettes, the Wisconsin Department of Public Health and the Illinois Department of Public Health conducted a study in July of that year, finding a correlation between patients who reported vaping and those who were hospitalized for severe lung disease or respiratory issues. More studies need to be done to understand the long-term effects of vaping. We don't know if vaping will cause long-term lung disease or if the lungs will be able to heal.

Q: WITH THE NEW STUDY, WOULD YOU SAY VAPING IS WORSE THAN SMOKING?

DR. BANZON: It is hard to say what is worse, but what we do know is that many of the vaping products are not regulated. So there are vaping pens and inhalers available in gas stations, and consumers do not know what is in that liquid they are inhaling. We also know that some vaping devices and liquids contain more nicotine than a cigarette. It has been reported in some cases that a vaping pod includes more nicotine than 20 cigarettes. So in this way, vaping can actually be more addictive than cigarettes.

Q: VAPING WAS INITIALLY INTRODUCED AS A WAY TO QUIT SMOKING; HOWEVER, WITH THE NEW STUDY SHOWING HOW DANGEROUS IT IS, WHAT SHOULD PEOPLE DO?

DR. BANZON: I recommend patients work with their physicians or healthcare teams to quit smoking and vaping. Both are detrimental to your health and your body. If you think about it, every time you put something into your body, it will have an effect on you – good or bad. In the case of vaping chemicals or cigarette chemicals, we know both damage your lungs and harm your health. Beebe offers smoking cessation counselors who are here to talk to you one-on-one to find a way to help you quit. In addition, there are many methods out there for those who are ready to quit smoking – prescriptions, hypnosis, and integrative health treatments such as ear seeds or acupuncture. Each person is different, so it is best to learn all of your options and then determine what might work best for you.

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