Health advisory for vaping products

Health Canada is advising Canadians who use vaping products to monitor themselves for symptoms of pulmonary illness including coughing, shortness of breath, chest pain, nausea and dizziness. Canadians should seek medical attention promptly if they have concerns about their health. Cases of acute pulmonary illnesses and several deaths reportedly linked to the use of vaping products have been reported in the United States. Ontario has confirmed its first case of vaping-related pulmonary illness.

Health Minister Christine Elliott has ordered Ontario hospitals to report all cases of vaping-related pulmonary illness to the Chief Medical Officer of Health as per section 77.7.1 of the Health Protection and Promotion Act. Healthcare professionals are reminded to ask patients about any use of electronic cigarettes and vaping products when presented with respiratory symptoms, especially when the cause is unclear.

Vaping is the act of inhaling and exhaling an aerosol produced by a vaping product, such as an e-cigarette. Vaping does not require burning the way cigarette smoking does. The device heats a liquid into a vapour, which then turns into an aerosol. This vapour may contain flavourings, diacetyl, propylene glycol, vegetable glycerin, tetrahydrocannabinol (THC - the psychoactive component of cannabis), or nicotine.

Recent surveys indicate 15% of Canadians have tried a vaping product. Among youth and young adults, vaping usage has increased by 74% in one year.

More information is available on the Health Canada website.

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