

# Study finds using electronic cigarettes can lead to 'substantially increased risk' for teens and young adults of developing covid-19

By Melissa Patrick  
Kentucky Health News

Electronic cigarettes are linked to a "substantially increased risk" of covid-19 among teens and young adults, a new study says.

"This study tells us pretty clearly that youth who are using vapes or are dual-using [e-cigarettes and cigarettes] are at elevated risk, and it's not just a small increase in risk; it's a big one," the lead researcher, Dr. Shivani Mathur Gaiha, a postdoctoral researcher at Stanford University, said in a news release.

The study, published in the Journal of Adolescent Health, found that people from 13 to 24 who use e-cigarettes have a "substantially increased" risk of becoming infected with the coronavirus and exhibiting symptoms of covid-19, such as coughing, fever, tiredness, and difficulty breathing.

The researchers found that among young people who were tested for the coronavirus, those who used e-cigarettes were five to seven times more likely to be infected than those who did not.

In Kentucky, 26.1 percent of high-school students use e-cigarettes frequently (on 20 or more of the 30 days before the survey) and 8.7% use e-

cigs daily, according to the 2019 Youth Risk Behavior Survey.

The findings prompted two Illinois Democrats, Senate Minority Whip Dick Durbin and Rep. Raja Krishnamoorthi, chair of the U.S. House Oversight and Reform Committee's consumer subcommittee, to urge the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to encourage college campuses to go tobacco-free, and that all such policies should include e-cigarettes, Beth Wang reports for Inside Health Policy.

"College-age tobacco users are at heightened risk of contracting the virus, and they will spread it," the legislators wrote. "Young people are increasingly driving the spread of covid-19, and that will only increase with reopened college campuses if appropriate public health precautions are not strictly implemented."

The latest Kentucky report shows 710 college and university students and 27 staff have active cases of the virus and that 1,417 students and 60 staff have ever testing positive for it. Those numbers are almost certainly under-reported.

The legislators noted that most college students are already unable to legally purchase tobacco products, since Congress raised the tobacco-purchas-

ing age from 18 to 21 in December, Wang reports.

In a letter to state Health Commissioner Steven Stack, the Coalition for a Smoke-Free Tomorrow walks through the known risks from covid-19 associated with smoking.

The letter says the CDC has identified smokers as a group of people at higher risk for severe illness from covid-19 if they contract the disease, and the World Health Organization has found that "smokers are more likely to develop severe disease with covid-10, compared to non-smokers."

The letter expands on how smoking harms the lungs, how tobacco weakens the immune system, how smoking is the major cause of a list of underlying health conditions, like heart disease and diabetes, and that a growing body of evidence shows that vaping can harm lung health.

"While it is not yet clear if smoking can increase the likelihood of contracting the disease, evidence confirms that smokers are more susceptible to severe symptoms if they do contract covid-19," says the letter, signed by Ben Chandler, the coalition's chair and CEO of the Foundation for a Healthy Kentucky.

Kentucky adults who want to quit

smoking can call the state's free quit-tobacco line, 1-800-QUIT-NOW (784-8669).

Teens who want to quit vaping can use a program called "My Life, My Quit," a free service for minors. The program includes live support by phone, text or online chat.

Participants can join by texting START MY QUIT to 855-891-9989 or going to MyLifeMyQuit.com. Teens are eligible for up to five calls with an experienced and trained Quit Coach. The program does not provide nicotine replacement therapy.

Here are other resources for teens looking to quit:

- Truth Initiative text message program: Text DITCHJUUL to 88709 or visit <https://truthinitiative.org/research-resources/quitting-smoking-vaping/quitting-e-cigarettes>

- Not On Tobacco (NOT), a 10-week, voluntary program for small groups of teens aged 14-19: <https://www.lung.org/quit-smoking/helping-teens-quit/not-on-tobacco>

- Become a Smoke-Free Teen: Quit Vaping explains tools to help you quit and how to use them, from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services: <https://teen.smokefree.gov/>

## Police activity report

**William Scott Riddell**, 46, of Locomotive Street, Irvine was charged September 5 with fourth degree assault (domestic violence) minor injury by Det. Sam Hensley.

The citation states that Riddell assaulted his wife at their residence. An argument began when Riddell attempted to take the keys to his wife's car.

She told the detective that she refused to give her husband the keys because he was intoxicated.

She added that the husband brought a male friend and said he would be driving. She stated she would take the other male home, but she was not giving him the keys.

When she leaned in the window to tell the other male that she would be taking him home. She told the detective that her Riddell pulled her from the window and placed her in a choke hold.

The citation states that Riddell also hit her a few times. She received no injuries other than some red skinned areas.

Riddell left the residence on foot and could not be immediately located. He was arrested by the Estill County Sheriff's office a short time later on an unrelated charge.

On Sept. 4, Officer Jason Conrad served a Jackson District Court warrant on **Daniel G. Smith**, 40, of McKee. The arrest was made at Bluebird Lane, Irvine.

Two warrants for Estill Circuit Court were served Sept. 3 on **Darold Patton**, 19, a homeless man of Irvine. Officer Conrad served Patton's warrants on Broadway in Irvine.

Officer Conrad served two warrants for Estill District Court Sept. 1 on **Phillip Stone**, 43, of Cantrill Street, Irvine.

Officer James Marshall conducted a traffic stop Sept. 5 on a vehicle driven by **Walter Scott Estes**, 55, of S. Irvine Road, Irvine, KY.

A citation states the vehicle was stopped on Main Street for a broken tail light.

The officer said that Estes had three

known drug users in the vehicle with him.

Estes passed field sobriety tests. Estes gave consent to search the vehicle.

Deputy Chris Coffey located a small amount of methamphetamine in a cigarette package and a marijuana joint in the center of the dash.

Marshall charged Estes with a vehicle lamp/tail light violation, possession of a controlled substance, first degree and first offense (methamphetamine), and possession of marijuana.

**Jonas Townsend**, 46, of Kirkland Ave., Irvine was charged Sept. 5 by Deputy Josh King with improper equipment, failure to produce insurance, failure of owner to maintain required insurance, and operating on a suspended/revoked operators license.

The citation states that Townsend was traveling on Richmond Road when he was stopped for having only one rear tail light, and the vehicle was swerving back and forth in its lane.

It adds that a K-9 was deployed and alerted on Townsend's vehicle. A glass pipe containing white residue, baggies, and a straw pipe were located.

Townsend was then charged with drug paraphernalia -- buy/possess. He is scheduled to appear in Estill District Court on October 24.

**Devon Coffey**, 24, of Berea was charged Sept. 6 by Deputy Chris Coffey with no insurance, no registration plates, no registration receipt, and driving on a suspended license.

The deputy stated that he observed Coffey driving with one tail light. The traffic stop was made at the Irvine Save-A-Lot parking lot.

His permit was suspended. The driver reportedly told the deputy that he had a new bulb for his tail light but it was at his home.

**Charles Lakes**, 52, of Cedar Grove Road, Irvine, was charged with operating a vehicle with expired operating license on Sept. 8 by Deputy King. The traffic stop was made on Richmond Road.

Lakes is scheduled to appear in Estill District Court on October 28.



An old barn across from Estill County High School was torn down this summer. The barn is completely down now. The Board of Education had taken bids on removing the barn.

## Estill County Public Library selected for 'Libraries Lead with Digital Skills' funding

The American Library Association (ALA) announced today that six Kentucky public libraries were selected to participate in the current round of Libraries Lead with Digital Skills — an initiative of ALA and the Public Library Association (PLA), sponsored by Grow with Google, the tech company's economic opportunity initiative.

Kentucky libraries receiving funding include:

- ▶ Boyle County Public Library (Danville)
- ▶ Daviess County Public Library (Owensboro)
- ▶ Estill County Public Library (Irvine)
- ▶ Hopkinsville-Christian County Public Library
- ▶ McCracken County Public Library (Paducah)
- ▶ William B. Harlan Memorial Library (Tompkinsville)

The selected libraries will


receive \$2,000 in grant funding to host virtual or in-person workshops using Grow with Google resources over the next two months.

"Libraries have long been America's gathering place for learning. From learning new digital skills for the workplace, to creating a résumé or growing your business online, people are going to libraries as resources for professional growth now more than ever," said Nicky Rigg, program manager for Digital Skills outreach at Google. "Grow with Google is excited to support library programs across the country to help ensure that economic opportunity exists for everyone."

This program is funded by Libraries Lead with Digital Skills, which was created so that local libraries can combine their own program offerings with Grow with

Google training materials to offer virtual community workshops or other activities aimed at empowering small businesses to grow online or assisting job seekers to prepare for and find work. This grant was awarded to libraries whose applications innovatively responded to the impact of COVID-19 through virtual library services.

The Grow with Google initiative draws on Google's 20-year history of building products, platforms, and services that help people and businesses grow. Through this initiative, they aim to help everyone across America — those who make up the workforce of today and those who will drive the workforce of tomorrow — access the best of Google's training and tools to grow their skills, careers, and businesses.



**The Garden Bug**

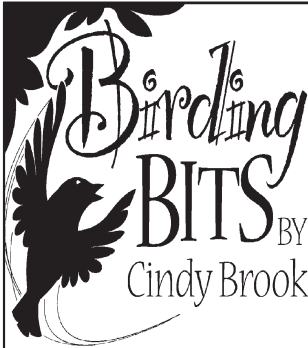
Lavandula (common name **lavender**) comprises 39 species of flowering plants in the mint family. It is cultivated extensively in temperate climates for use as ornamental plants for garden and landscape use, as culinary herbs, and also to produce essential oils, which are used in perfumes, medicinal treatments and in beauty products. Bunches of it can repel insects.

- Brenda Weaver  
Source: wikipedia.org

## AL Post 79 meetings on Sunday

All meetings at the American Legion will be held on Sunday, Sept. 13 at the time your meeting is to be held.

The meetings were postponed one week because of Labor Day weekend.



**Birding BITS** BY Cindy Brook

*Nature as Teacher*  
Because I feed the birds, I have learned a lot about other creatures that live in my yard, like broad-headed and five-lined skinks, green and brown anoles and a few varieties of frogs. Birds aren't the only things in nature that are beautiful. What have you seen?

E-mail: [birdingbits@cflrr.com](mailto:birdingbits@cflrr.com)  
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## Two are charged with 2nd degree assault

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Timothy Stanley had a laceration on the back of his hand. He reportedly told the deputy that Riddell had pushed his mother down. He stepped in to intervene by pushing Riddell back.

He then added that Riddell pulled a knife and swung it at him. He attempted to prevent getting cut by raising his hand, which resulted in his injury.

Riddell was later found up the road from the residence. He was charged with assault second degree and assault fourth degree (domestic violence) no visible injury.

Riddell was taken to the Three Forks Regional Jail in Beattyville.