

California campaign will warn public of vaping dangers

September 16 2019, by Kathleen Ronayne



In this April 11, 2018, file photo, a high school student uses a vaping device near a school campus in Cambridge, Mass. California Gov. Gavin Newsom will announce an executive action Monday, Sept. 16, 2019, to confront youth health concerns related to vaping. (AP Photo/Steven Senne, File)

California will spend \$20 million on a public awareness campaign about the dangers of vaping nicotine and cannabis products and step up efforts to halt the sale of illicit products amid a rise in vaping-related illnesses.

Democratic Gov. Gavin Newsom announced the actions Monday as part of an executive order.

Many of the hundreds of nationwide vaping illnesses appear linked to use of cannabis-based oils, though some people reported vaping nicotine products, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. California has seen at least 63 cases and one of the six deaths reported around the country.

At the same time, flavored [e-cigarettes](#) made by companies such as Juul Labs are contributing to a rise in youth smoking. The public awareness campaign Newsom announced aims to tackle all forms of vaping, he said.

"As a father of four, this has been an issue that has been brought to the forefront of my consciousness," he said.

While President Donald Trump and New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo have announced plans to ban the sale of flavored e-cigarettes, Newsom said he doesn't have similar executive authority. But he said he wants lawmakers to send him legislation to do so next year. A similar effort failed this year.

Beyond the public awareness campaign, Newsom has directed the state departments of public health and tax and fee administration to explore ways to warn people about the potential dangers of [vaping](#) and tackle the sale of illicit products.

He's asked the public health department to explore new warning signs at

retailers and in advertisements.

On the tax side, he's asking officials to consider changing how e-cigarettes are taxed, because they typically face lower taxes than traditional cigarettes. Making the products more expensive to buy could make them harder for teenagers to purchase, he argued.

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