

Burns, blast injuries on the rise from exploding e-cigarettes

October 7 2016



(HealthDay)—Electronic-cigarette devices are randomly and

unexpectedly exploding, burning and injuring people near them when they detonate, according to a research letter published in the Oct. 6 issue of the *New England Journal of Medicine*.

The University of Washington Regional Burn Center in Seattle has treated 22 people for burns and other injuries caused by exploding e-cigarettes since October 2015, lead author Elisha Brownson, M.D., a burn/critical care surgical fellow at the hospital, told *HealthDay*.

The explosions are caused by the [lithium-ion batteries](#) used in e-cigarettes, Brownson said. These [rechargeable batteries](#) charge a heating coil that brings liquid nicotine and flavorings to the [boiling point](#) inside the device, creating an inhalable vapor. Batteries in some of the devices are overheating, causing a fire or an explosion, she said. The first Seattle case Brownson treated was a man in his 20s using an e-cigarette while driving. The device exploded in his mouth, blowing out several front teeth. She said she has since treated a variety of burns and [blast injuries](#) caused by e-cigarettes, including patients with flame burns covering 10 to 15 percent of their total body surface.

"We see a lot of patients who have burns on their thigh and their hands. That's when the device has exploded in their pocket, and they're using their hands to get the device out and away from them," Brownson said.

"There also have been a lot of injuries to the hands and face when people have had explosions as they've been using them. Patients tell us they had no idea this could happen. They've had little to no warning that the device is going to explode."

More information: [Full Text](#)

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Citation: Burns, blast injuries on the rise from exploding e-cigarettes (2016, October 7) retrieved 25 April 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2016-10-blast-injuries-e-cigarettes.html>

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