

Florida teen addicted to e-cigarettes: 'I never realized how dependent I would be'

Teen suffering multiple health issues after developing addiction to e-cigarettes

By **Amy Viteri** - Investigative Reporter

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FORT LAUDERDALE, Fla. - The hidden dangers of e-cigarettes, once touted as a less harmful way of smoking, has been a hot topic lately.

Those e-cigs are now being blamed for a wide range of breathing and other health problems, and it's not just adults dealing with these issues.

Bailey Legacki started using Juul when she was around 15-year-old.

She had no idea that the fun mango-flavored vapor was full of highly-addictive nicotine.

"In my head I think it's just a flavored little vape. Water vapor if that," she said. "It made me feel good, I never realized how dependent I would be on it in a few years."

Juul packaging currently carries a warning, saying the product contains a 5% strength of nicotine.

Legacki says there was no warning label when she started buying the product.

Now 18 years old and a graduate of Copper City High School, Legacki says she suffers from chronic migraines and breathing issues.

"I wheeze. I never had problems with my lungs at all," she said.

Fort Lauderdale attorney Steven Hammer with Schlesinger Law Offices says several cases have been filed by his firm on behalf of young people that are suffering health issues due to using Juul.

"Basically the e-cigarette market has taken a page right out of the tobacco playbook and that is you target the kids, because once you get a kid hooked, you got a customer for life," said Hammer. "We've had kids that have seizures from it, kids that have tremendous breathing difficulties from it."

A motion was filed by the firm, asking a Florida federal court to ban Juul sales.

The motion claims that the company has been marketing its addictive products towards children.

As for Legacki, she says that can't quit, despite seeing reports of young people across the country having health issues after using Juul.

"It hurts because I don't want that to be me, but it's something that's so hard to quick that it could be me," she said.

The company Juul Labs states their products are for adult use only.

According to Hammer, if Juul is marketed as an alternative to cigarettes for adult smokers, then it makes more sense to change it to a prescription product to keep it out of the hands of minors.

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