

MMWR Highlights

Cigarette Smoking Among Adults and Trends in Smoking Cessation—United States, 2008

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- In 2008, an estimated 20.6% (46.0 million) of U.S. adults were current cigarette smokers; of these, 79.8% (36.7 million) smoked every day, and 20.2% (9.3 million) smoked some days.
- Over the past decade there was a 3.5% decline in the proportion of U.S. adults who were current cigarette smokers (20.6% in 2008 compared to 24.1% in 1998). However, the proportion did not change significantly from 2007 (19.8%) to 2008 (20.6%).
- In 2008, smoking prevalence was higher among men (23.1%) than women (18.3%).
- Smoking prevalence was highest among adults who had earned a General Educational Development (GED) certificate (41.3%) and those with 9--11 years of education (35.7%) and lowest among adults with a graduate degree (5.7%).
- Among the different racial/ethnic groups, Asians (9.9%) had the lowest smoking prevalence while American Indians and Alaska Natives (32.4%) had significantly higher prevalence than the other racial/ethnic groups. Smoking prevalence among whites (22%) and blacks (21.3%) was significantly higher than among Hispanics (15.8%).
- Smoking prevalence was lowest among those 65 years and older (9.3%) compared to those 18–24 years (21.4%), 25–44 years (23.7%) and 45–64 years (22.6%).
- Smoking was higher among adults living below the federal poverty level (31.5%) than among those at or above this level (19.6%).
- Subpopulations who meet the *Healthy People 2010* objective to reduce the prevalence of adult cigarette smoking to 12% or less include: Hispanic (10.7%) and Asian (4.7%) women, women with undergraduate degrees (9.7%), women with graduate degrees (5.9%), and women aged 65 years and older (8.4%). Men with graduate degrees (5.6%), men with undergraduate degrees (11.5%) and men aged 65 years and older (10.6%) also met this goal.

Quit Attempts

- In 2008, quit ratios were lowest for adults 25 years and older with a GED (39.9%), adults with no high school diploma (45.7%), and adults with a high school diploma (48.8%). The overall quit ratio for adults was 53.8%.
- In 2008, 45.3% (20.8 million) adult current everyday smokers had stopped smoking for more than one day in the past 12 months because they were trying to quit.

- Among the estimated 94 million ever smokers, persons who had smoked at least 100 cigarettes during their lifetimes, 51.1% (48.1 million) were no longer smoking at the time of the interview.