HISPANIC/LATINO AMERICANS

CIGARETTE SMOKING RATES
AMONG HISPANIC/LATINO AMERICAN SUBGROUPS

- Puerto Rican adults: HIGHER RATE
- Dominican and Central or South American adults: LOWER RATE
- Born in the U.S.
- Not born in the U.S.
- Men
- Women

Research shows a link between increased acculturation in U.S. and increased smoking prevalence.

Smoking prevalence varies significantly among Hispanic/Latino American subgroups.

Tobacco companies targeted Hispanics with advertising themes and financial contributions to cultural organizations.
BACKGROUND

Individuals of Hispanic/Latino decent comprise 18.3% (60 million) of the U.S. population.¹ Nearly 1 in 10 Hispanic/Latino adults currently smoke cigarettes² — lower than the national smoking rate of 13.7%. However, studies have shown the prevalence varies significantly between subgroups from specific countries or regions, with Puerto Rican adults having the highest smoking rates and Dominicans having the lowest. Results also indicate Hispanic/Latino adults who were born in the U.S. have higher smoking rates — likely related to increased acculturation, which additional research has found to be linked with increased smoking prevalence.³,⁴

PATTERNS OF USE IN THE U.S.

YOUTH

- According to the 2019 National Youth Tobacco Survey, 3.8% of Hispanic/Latino high school students currently use cigarettes compared to 5.8% of high schoolers overall.⁵

- Among Hispanic/Latino middle schoolers, 3.1% currently use cigarettes compared to 2.3% of middle schoolers overall.⁵

- E-cigarettes are the most commonly used tobacco product among Hispanic/Latino high school students (23.2%) and middle school students (13.1%). Overall, 10.5% of middle schoolers and 27.5% of high schoolers use e-cigarettes.⁵
ADULTS

- In 2018, 9.8% of Hispanic/Latino adults were current cigarette smokers, the lowest of all surveyed groups except Asian Americans at 7.1%. The overall adult rate was 13.7%.²

- Rates of smoking differ widely within Hispanic/Latino subgroups and by gender. Hispanic/Latino adults who identify as Puerto Rican have consistently reported the highest current smoking compared to other subgroups, whereas Dominican and Central or South American adults have reported the lowest.⁴,⁶

- Among all subgroups, adult Hispanic/Latino women have reported significantly lower smoking rates than men.⁶

- Among Hispanic/Latino adults, 2.5% currently use e-cigarettes compared to 3.2% of adults overall.²

- A recent published analysis found that in 2015, 56.2% of Hispanic/Latino smokers had made a quit attempt in the past year. However, Hispanic/Latino smokers had lower odds of receiving quitting advice from a health professional compared to white smokers.⁷

HEALTH EFFECTS

- Despite generally lower rates of smoking, smoking is the leading preventable cause of morbidity and mortality among the Hispanic/Latino population in the U.S.⁸

- Cancer is the primary cause of death among Hispanic/Latino Americans, followed by cardiovascular disease.⁹ More than 43,000 Hispanic/Latino Americans are diagnosed with a tobacco-related cancer each year and more than 18,000 die as a result.¹⁰

INDUSTRY MARKETING

Tobacco companies have a history of targeting racial and ethnic minorities, including the Hispanic/Latino population.

- In the 1970s and 1980s, Big Tobacco began to develop interest in the growing Hispanic/Latino population and launched marketing initiatives. Companies began using U.S. Census Bureau data to track demographic trends in order to more accurately target these initiatives.⁸

- Internal documents revealed the tobacco industry’s interest in the community was because they deemed the population “lucrative,” “easy to reach” and “undermarketed.”¹¹

- Decades later, the tobacco industry was still attempting to infiltrate these communities by compensating Hispanic/Latino merchants for displaying advertisements in predominantly Hispanic/Latino neighborhoods.¹²

- More recently, the industry has also sponsored Hispanic/Latino cultural events, provided scholarships, and made contributions to Hispanic/Latino political action committees to maintain its influence.⁸,¹³

Smoking is the leading preventable cause of death and disease among Hispanics/Latinos in the U.S.
REFERENCES


