

Cigarette smoking is the leading cause of preventable death in the U.S., accounting for nearly 1 in 5 deaths.<sup>1</sup> Reducing the prevalence of smoking is a health priority in Vermont. Vermont's [State Health Improvement Plan](#) identifies decreasing cigarette use in adults and increasing the proportion of current smokers who successfully quit or attempted to quit smoking as key objectives for 2019-2023.

This data brief summarizes results from the 2019 Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) for tobacco use (current cigarette use and smokeless tobacco) and quit attempts. Data for e-cigarettes in adults was not collected in the 2019 BRFSS survey. Prevalence of current smoking and quit attempts are presented by key demographic subgroups to identify disparities.

In 2019, 16% of adults in Vermont reported current use of cigarettes and 51% of current smokers made a quit attempt in the last year. Less than 3% of VT adults reported current use of smokeless tobacco products.

### KEY POINTS

- In 2019, 16% of adult Vermonters smoked cigarettes. The VT smoking rate remains significantly higher than the U.S. rate of 14%.<sup>1</sup>
- Historically, the smoking rate among Vermonters of color has been higher than the state rate. However, in 2019, quit attempts among people of color was 1.5x the state rate and the smoking rate was the same as the state rate.

### Adult Smoking Prevalence & Quit Attempts in Vermont, 2019 BRFSS

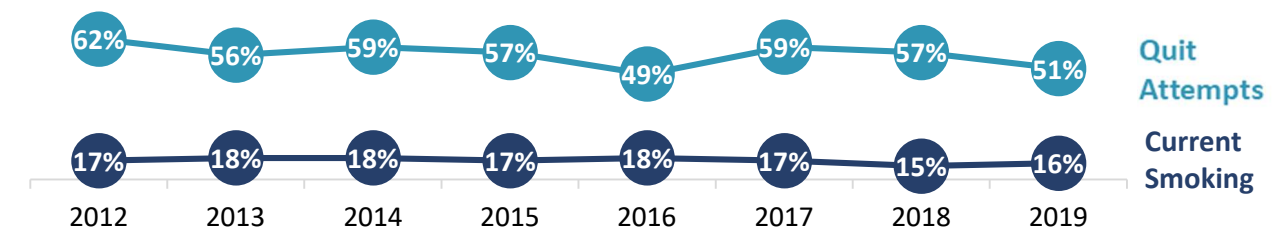
	%	Estimated Vermonters <sup>‡</sup>
Current Cigarette Use	16.4 <sup>†</sup>	72,800
Smokeless Tobacco Use	2.8	13,300
Quit Attempts among Cigarette Users	51.3 <sup>†</sup>	37,600

<sup>†</sup> Age adjusted to standard U.S. 2000 adult population according to healthy people guidelines

<sup>‡</sup> Estimated counts are rounded to the nearest hundred Vermonters and not age adjusted.

Following a significant decrease in smoking prevalence between 2016 and 2018, there was no significant change between 2018 and 2019. Quit attempts have trended downward in recent years, from 62% in 2012 to 51% in 2019. The rate of quit attempts in 2019 was similar to 2018.

### Trend in Smoking Prevalence Among Vermont Adults, 2012-2019 VT BRFSS



Data is age-adjusted to standard U.S. 2000 population according to healthy people 2020 guidelines

<sup>1</sup> [https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/data\\_statistics/fact\\_sheets/adult\\_data/cig\\_smoking/index.htm](https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/data_statistics/fact_sheets/adult_data/cig_smoking/index.htm)

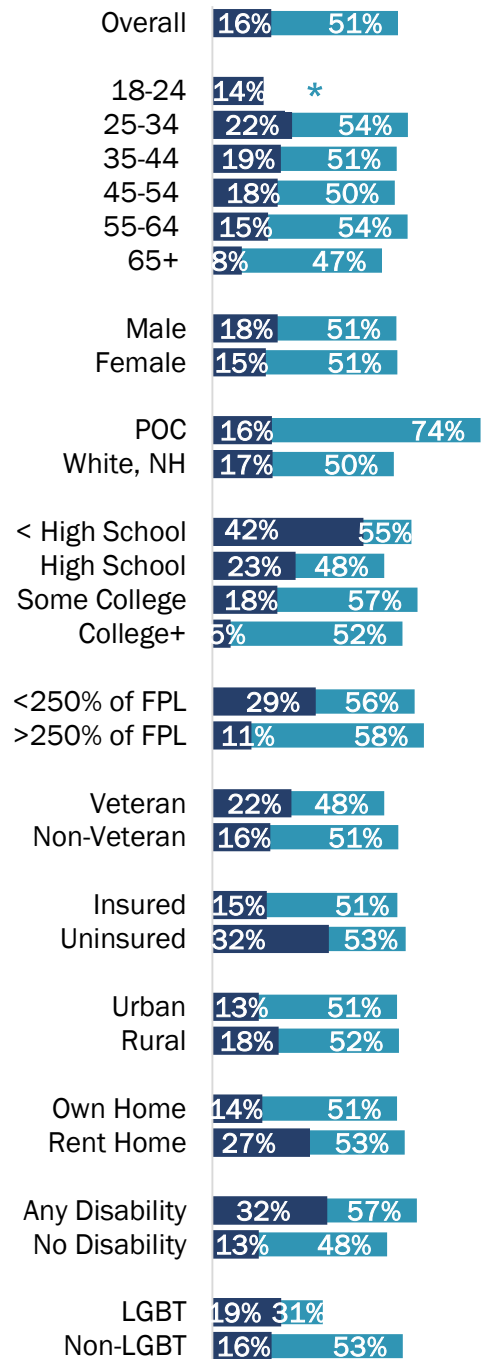
## DEMOGRAPHICS

Smoking rates among VT adults significantly differed, in 2019, by age, education, income, insurance, geography, housing status and disability status.

- Cigarette smoking was significantly higher in adults ages 25-34 (22%) and 35-44 (19%) years compared to adults 65 years and older (8%).
- Smoking rates were significantly higher in adults with less than a high school education (42%) compared to adults with college education (5%).
- Adults living in households with an income below 250% of the federal poverty level (FPL) had significantly higher smoking rates (29%) than those in households with an income above 250% of the FPL (11%).
- Adults with no health insurance have significantly higher rates of smoking than those with health insurance (32% vs. 15%).
- Rural Vermonters smoked at a significantly higher rate than urban Vermonters (18% vs. 13%).
- Vermonters who rented a home smoked at twice the rate of Vermonters who owned a home (27% vs. 14%).
- The smoking rate among adults with any disability was more than two times that of those with no disability (32% vs 13%).
- There were no significant differences in smoking rates by gender, race, veteran status, or sexual orientation.
- Quit attempts were significantly higher for POC (74%) compared to White, Non-Hispanic Vermonters (50%). Quit attempts were significantly lower for LGBT Vermonters than non-LGBT (31% vs. 53%). No other significant differences were noted by age, gender, education, income, veteran status, insurance, geography, housing status or disability status.

## Adult Smoking Prevalence and Quit Attempts by Demographic Characteristics, 2019 VT BRFSS

■ Current Smoking ■ Quit Attempts



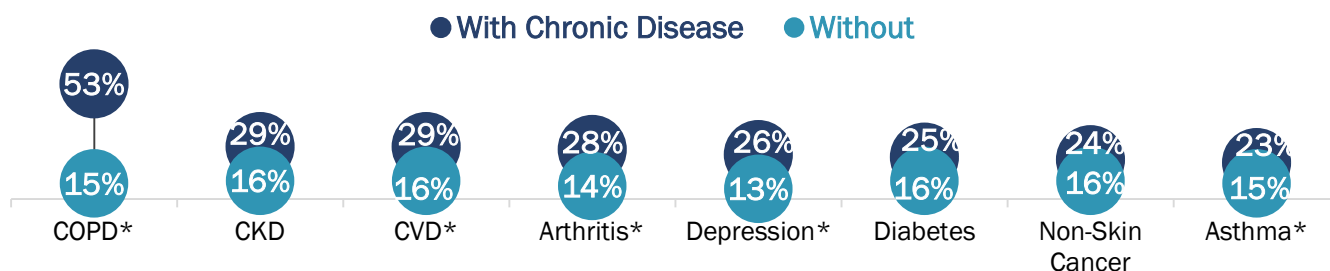
Prevalence data on this page is age-adjusted to U.S. 2000 population according to healthy people 2020 guidelines. NH=Non-Hispanic; POC=People of color; FPL=Federal Poverty Level; LGBT=Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender  
\*Value has been suppressed due to small sample size.

## CHRONIC CONDITIONS AND HEALTH STATUS

In 2019, smoking prevalence remained higher in adults with certain chronic diseases.

- Adults with COPD were three times more likely to report current smoking than those without.
- Those with cardiovascular disease (CVD), arthritis, depression and asthma were two times or more likely to report current smoking than those without these conditions.
- There were no significant differences in smoking rates between those with chronic kidney disease (CKD), diabetes, and non-skin cancer compared to adults without these conditions.

### Smoking Prevalence in Adults with Chronic Health Conditions, 2019 VT BRFSS



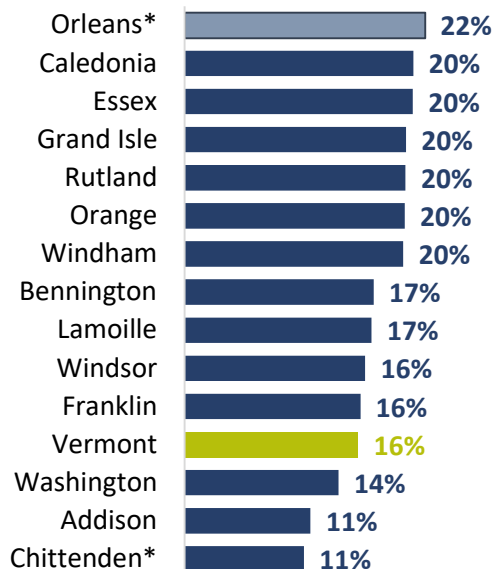
COPD=Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease; CVD=Cardiovascular disease; CKD=Chronic Kidney Disease

Vermonters who smoke were more than twice as likely to report fair to poor general health (27% vs. 11%), poor physical health (24% vs. 11%), or poor mental health (27% vs. 12%) compared to non-smokers.

## SMOKING PREVALENCE BY COUNTY

Adult smoking prevalence ranged from 22% in Orleans County to 11% in Chittenden County. Adult cigarette use in Chittenden County (11%) was significantly lower than the state average of 16% while cigarette use in Orleans County (22%) was significantly higher than the state average. No other regions differed significantly from the state average.

### Smoking Prevalence by County, VT BRFSS, 2018-2019



## FOR MORE INFORMATION

### Vermont Tobacco Data

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[www.healthvermont.gov/health-statistics-vital-records/surveillance-reporting-topic/tobacco](http://www.healthvermont.gov/health-statistics-vital-records/surveillance-reporting-topic/tobacco)

### Vermont Tobacco Control Program

[tobaccovt@vermont.gov](mailto:tobaccovt@vermont.gov);  
[www.healthvermont.gov/wellness/tobacco](http://www.healthvermont.gov/wellness/tobacco)

Data brief prepared by Connor Zwonik, 2021 Health Surveillance intern.

Prevalence data on this page is age-adjusted to U.S. 2000 population according to healthy people 2020 guidelines. Vermont and county rates are the average for 2018 and 2019.

\* Indicates statistically significant difference.

# Tobacco Use in VT: BRFSS, 2019

## Adult Smoking Prevalence and Quit Attempts by Demographic Characteristics (VT BRFSS, 2019)

	Smoking Prevalence			Quit Attempts		
	%	Estimated Vermonters	Diff from State Rate?	%	Estimated Vermonters	Diff from State Rate?
<b>Overall</b>	16.4	72,800		51.3	37,600	
<b>Age Group</b>						
18-24 years*	14.2 <sup>AB</sup>	9,000		--	--	
25-34 years	22.0 <sup>A</sup>	14,400		54.0 <sup>A</sup>	7,800	
35-44 years	18.9 <sup>A</sup>	12,500		51.0 <sup>A</sup>	6,400	
45-54 years	18.0 <sup>A</sup>	12,600		50.4 <sup>A</sup>	6,300	
55-64 years	15.4 <sup>A</sup>	14,100		53.9 <sup>A</sup>	7,600	
65+ years	8.2 <sup>B</sup>	9,700	Yes	46.8 <sup>A</sup>	4,500	
<b>Gender</b>						
Male	18.1 <sup>A</sup>	38,500		50.8 <sup>A</sup>	19,300	
Female	14.8 <sup>A</sup>	34,300		51.1 <sup>A</sup>	18,200	
<b>Race-Ethnicity</b>						
White, non-Hispanic	16.7 <sup>A</sup>	67,600		50.2 <sup>A</sup>	34,100	
People of Color	16.5 <sup>A</sup>	4,200		74.1 <sup>B</sup>	2,900	Yes
<b>Education</b>						
Less than high school	41.8 <sup>A</sup>	13,200	Yes	55.0 <sup>A</sup>	6,200	
High school	23.0 <sup>A</sup>	29,400	Yes	47.5 <sup>A</sup>	14,000	
Some college	18.0 <sup>B</sup>	21,900		56.7 <sup>A</sup>	13,000	
College or higher	5.1 <sup>C</sup>	8,000	Yes	52.5 <sup>A</sup>	4,400	
<b>Federal Poverty Level</b>						
<250% of FPL	28.6 <sup>A</sup>	28,400	Yes	55.9 <sup>A</sup>	15,700	
>250% of FPL	10.8 <sup>B</sup>	15,000	Yes	58.5 <sup>A</sup>	8,800	
<b>Veteran Status</b>						
Veteran	21.9 <sup>A</sup>	7,600		47.5 <sup>A</sup>	3,800	
Non-Veteran	16.0 <sup>A</sup>	65,100		51.4 <sup>A</sup>	33,800	
<b>Insurance Status</b>						
Insured	15.1 <sup>A</sup>	63,000		51.1 <sup>A</sup>	32,400	
Uninsured	32.2 <sup>B</sup>	9,100	Yes	53.4 <sup>A</sup>	4,400	
<b>Geographic Status</b>						
Urban	12.8 <sup>A</sup>	20,700		51.0 <sup>A</sup>	10,200	
Rural	18.3 <sup>B</sup>	49,700		51.6 <sup>A</sup>	26,100	
<b>Housing Status</b>						
Own home	13.8 <sup>A</sup>	42,500		51.0 <sup>A</sup>	22,000	
Rent home	27.0 <sup>B</sup>	30,000	Yes	53.1 <sup>A</sup>	15,600	
<b>Disability Status</b>						
No Disability	12.9 <sup>A</sup>	44,300	Yes	56.5 <sup>A</sup>	16,000	
Any disability	31.8 <sup>B</sup>	28,100	Yes	48.3 <sup>A</sup>	21,500	
<b>Sexual Orientation</b>						
Heterosexual/Cisgender	16.4 <sup>A</sup>	64,100		52.6 <sup>A</sup>	33,800	
LGBT	19.1 <sup>A</sup>	6,600		30.5 <sup>B</sup>	2,700	Yes

<sup>†</sup>Percentages are age-adjusted to standard U.S. 2000 population according to Healthy People 2020 guidelines.

<sup>‡</sup>Estimated Counts are rounded to the nearest hundred Vermonters and are not age-adjusted.

-- Indicates data has been suppressed due to small numbers

<sup>A, B, C, D</sup> Groups within demographic categories that share a common letter are statistically similar to each other. For example, smoking among insured and uninsured Vermonters is significantly different, while quit attempts is similar.