

Cigarette Smoking Behavior of Adults: United States, 1997–98

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Abstract

Objective—This report presents national estimates for lifetime and current cigarette smoking status, average number of cigarettes smoked, age of smoking initiation, and smokers' attempts to quit in the past year. Data are from the adult component of the 1997–98 National Health Interview Survey (NHIS), conducted by the National Center for Health Statistics.

Methods—Data for persons of all ages in the U.S. civilian noninstitutionalized population are collected in the NHIS using computer-assisted personal interviews (CAPI). In the 1997 and 1998 surveys combined, a total of 68,556 interviews were completed by a subsample of adults aged 18 years and over, with an overall response rate of 77.2%. Statistics shown in this report were age adjusted to the 2000 U.S. standard population.

Results—Overall, 1 in 4 (24.2%) U.S. adults were current smokers in 1997–98. About 1 in 4 (23.2%) adults were former smokers and about one-half (52.6%) of adults had never smoked. Daily smokers smoked about 19 cigarettes a day compared with about 6 cigarettes a day for nondaily smokers (on days that they smoked). Smoking behavior was associated with sex, age, race/ethnicity, level of education, poverty status, marital status, region of the country, and place of residence. Only 1 in 5 (19.2%) current smokers started smoking on or after their 21st birthday, and almost one-third of smokers (29.6%) started younger than 16 years of age. About 4 in 10 (39.0%) daily smokers and over one-half (54.9%) of nondaily smokers had stopped smoking for more than 1 day in the preceding 12 months because they were trying to quit smoking.

Conclusions—Smoking behavior varied across population subgroups. Understanding subgroup differences in each of these aspects of smoking behavior may help target and evaluate smoking prevention and cessation programs.

Keywords: smoking • smoking status • former smokers • amount smoked • smoking cessation • National Health Interview Survey • National Center for Health Statistics

Introduction

The health threat posed by tobacco has been recognized by scientists since

the 17th century, with the systematic collection of information on the health effects of tobacco beginning in the early 20th century (1). As early as 1928,

studies indicated a link between smoking and cancer (2). The first population-based survey of smoking behavior in the United States was conducted by the U.S. Bureau of the Census in 1955 (1). The first Surgeon General's report on cigarette smoking, issued in 1964, summarized the accumulating body of evidence that tobacco poses serious health risks for those who choose to use it (3). Since that time, evidence of the negative health outcomes associated with use of tobacco has continued to mount (4,5). Although public awareness has increased over time and smoking prevalence rates have declined, cigarette smoking remains the leading preventable cause of death among U.S. adults in the 21st century (6).

The National Health Interview Survey NHIS, one of the major data collection systems of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS), is a large population-based survey of the U.S. civilian noninstitutionalized population. Questions on cigarette smoking were first asked of adults in the NHIS in 1964–65 when cigarette smoking prevalence was 51.2% for men and 33.7% for women (7). Between 1964 and 1995, smoking questions were included in NHIS in special topic

(supplement) questionnaires that were added to the basic core questionnaire in selected years. Smoking data were not collected in 1996. Since 1997, the annual NHIS adult (core) questionnaire has included a brief set of questions related to cigarette smoking. These core items are the subject of this report. From time to time, supplements collect additional information on tobacco use, including smoking behavior.

The NHIS has been used to track changes in smoking prevalence over time and is the official data source for monitoring progress toward meeting national health objectives for reductions in tobacco use (6). The goal for 2010 is to reduce adult smoking prevalence to 12%. Substantial reductions in smoking prevalence were observed between 1964 and 1990. Smoking prevalence dropped from 51.2% to 28.0% for men and from 33.7% to 22.9% for women (8) during this period of time. Further reductions through the 1990s, however, have been modest.

This report presents data on selected aspects of cigarette smoking behavior among U.S. adults in 1997–98: lifetime and current smoking prevalence, current smoking frequency (daily versus nondaily), number of cigarettes smoked in a day by daily smokers and by nondaily smokers, age at which persons started smoking cigarettes, and attempts by current smokers to quit smoking in the past year. Combining 2 years of data allows presentation of findings for smaller population subgroups with smaller standard errors than would be possible with a single year of data. The details provided in this report may help guide health professionals and policy makers in determining population subgroups that may benefit most from smoking-related public health education and service programs and as well as to evaluate the success of such programs.

Previously published reports in this series provide prevalence estimates for alcohol use, leisure-time physical activity, and body weight status for the same sociodemographic subgroups (9–11). Together, these reports contribute to creating a health behavior profile of the U.S. adult population. A report showing updates of these findings

for 1999–2001 will be released later this year.

Methods

Data source

The statistics shown in this report are based on data from the Sample Adult component of the 1997 and 1998 National Health Interview Survey (NHIS) (12,13). The NHIS, one of the major data collection systems of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS), is a large, population-based survey of a nationally representative sample of the U.S. civilian noninstitutionalized household population. Throughout the history of the NHIS, basic health and demographic information has been collected on all household members, by proxy if necessary. Additional information is collected on one randomly sampled adult aged 18 years or over and one randomly sampled child aged 0–17 years per family. Information on the sample adult, including smoking behavior, is self-reported except when the sample adult is physically or mentally incapable of responding (which occurs rarely).

The NHIS has been in the field continuously since 1957. About every 10 years, the survey has undergone a redesign of its content to keep pace with changing data needs. In 1997, the survey underwent its most extensive revision to date, changing not only the questionnaire content and structure, but also the mode of administration and data processing procedures. Two important features of the new NHIS are: (a) the core questionnaire now covers a wider range of health topics than earlier designs, and (b) more information is available on the sociodemographic characteristics of respondents. Detailed information about the 1997 design is available elsewhere (14).

Measurement of smoking

Lifetime smoking status—Measurement of lifetime smoking status has remained relatively unchanged over the history of the National Health

Interview Survey. *Never smokers* are adults aged 18 years and over who have never smoked any cigarettes or who have smoked fewer than 100 cigarettes in their lifetime. Respondents who have not smoked at least 100 cigarettes are not asked the questions about current smoking practices. *Former smokers* are adults who have smoked at least 100 cigarettes in their lifetime, but were not smoking at the time of interview. *Current smokers* are adults who have smoked at least 100 cigarettes in their lifetime and were still smoking on the date of interview. Classification of current smokers has changed slightly over the history of the NHIS. For 1964–91, current smokers were defined as those persons who had smoked at least 100 cigarettes in their lifetime and answered “yes” to the followup question, “Do you smoke now?” In 1992, the NHIS question about current smoking was modified slightly to be consistent with international smoking data. This change enabled identification of persons who smoked daily and those who smoked less than daily. The question was changed to read “Do you now smoke cigarettes every day, some days, or not at all?” In this report, estimates for all current smokers are shown in [table 1](#).

Current smoking status—The category nonsmoker includes adults who had not smoked 100 cigarettes in their lifetime (i.e., never smokers) as well as those who smoked in the past, but quit smoking prior to the date of the interview (i.e., former smokers). Nondaily smokers include all adults who said they smoked “some days” regardless of the number of days they smoked in the past 30 days. Daily smokers are those who said they smoked every day.

Number of cigarettes smoked in a day—Separate questions about number of cigarettes were asked of adults who smoked every day (daily smokers) and adults who smoked only some days (nondaily smokers). For daily smokers, the question asked how many cigarettes they smoked a day, on average. For nondaily smokers, the question specified that they were being asked about the average number of cigarettes smoked *on*

those days that they smoked. Amount smoked is presented in two ways. [Table 2](#) shows the mean number of cigarettes smoked on those days the person smoked, for all smokers, daily smokers, and nondaily smokers. [Table 3](#) shows percent distributions of the number of cigarettes usually smoked in a day on those days the person smoked for all smokers (daily and nondaily) combined: less than 15 cigarettes, 15–24 cigarettes, 25–34 cigarettes, and 35 cigarettes or more. The estimates do not reflect average cigarette consumption over a period of time such as a week or a month.

Age of smoking initiation—Adults who had smoked at least 100 cigarettes in their entire life were asked at what age they first started to smoke fairly regularly. Data on age of initiation shown in this report are limited to estimates for current smokers ([table 4](#)).

Attempts to quit smoking—All current smokers were asked if they had stopped smoking for more than one day in the past year because they were trying to quit ([table 5](#)).

Strengths and limitations of the data

The NHIS questions on smoking behavior have several strengths. The questions shown in this report have been asked at intervals throughout the history of the NHIS. The criterion of having smoked at least 100 cigarettes (as the threshold for asking additional smoking questions) has been part of the NHIS from the beginning. The wording and positioning of the questions in the interview have been relatively stable. With few exceptions, smoking data are self-reported by the sample adult so that inaccuracies associated with proxy reporting are not an issue. Because the smoking questions for 1997 and 1998 were identical, the 2 years of data were combined to obtain more reliable estimates for smaller population subgroups.

The questions on smoking behavior also have some limitations. First, it is possible that some respondents may not be forthcoming about a behavior considered by many to be undesirable, thus possibly leading to underestimates

of current smoking and overestimates of attempts to quit. The number of cigarettes smoked is subject to rounding and estimation error by the respondent. Information on age at which smoking began is dependent on respondent recall of an event that may not have had a clear starting point and, especially for older respondents, may have occurred a long time ago.

Statistical analysis

Two years of data were combined to increase reliability of estimates for some of the smaller population subgroups. Even with the 2 years of data, the standard errors for some subgroups are quite large. In [tables 1–5](#), estimates with a relative standard error of more than 30% are identified with an asterisk. Caution should be exercised when interpreting these statistics. This report is based on data from 68,556 completed interviews with sample adults aged 18 years and over. This represents an overall sample adult response rate of 77.2%. Procedures used in calculating response rates are described in detail in appendix I of the Survey Description of the NHIS data files (12,13).

All estimates and associated standard errors shown in this report were generated using SUDAAN, a software package designed to handle the complex sample design used by the NHIS (15). All estimates were weighted to reflect the U.S. civilian noninstitutionalized population aged 18 years and over.

Most estimates presented in [tables 1–5](#) were age adjusted to the 2000 U.S. standard population aged 18 years and over. Age adjustment was used to allow comparison among various sociodemographic subgroups that have different age structures (16,17). (See Technical Notes for details.) For the population totals as well as for many of the sociodemographic subgroups, the age-adjusted and unadjusted estimates were similar. Tables showing unadjusted estimates by race/ethnicity, education, poverty status, marital status, geographic region, and location of residence are available on the NCHS Web site (18).

Age-adjusted estimates were compared using two-tailed *t*-tests at the

0.05 level. No adjustments were made for multiple comparisons. Terms such as “greater than” and “less than” indicate a statistically significant difference. Terms such as “similar” or “no difference” indicate that the statistics being compared were not significantly different. Lack of comment regarding the difference between any two statistics does not mean that the difference was tested and found to be not significant.

All statistics presented in this report can be replicated using NHIS public-use data files and accompanying documentation that is available for downloading from the NCHS Web site at <http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/nhis.htm>.

Results

All adults

- Overall, 24.2% of U.S. adults were current smokers in 1997–98 ([table 1](#)).
- Overall, 23.2% of adults were former smokers and about one-half of adults (52.6%) had never smoked cigarettes ([table 1](#) and [figure 1](#)).
- Among all adults, 19.9% smoked daily and 4.3% smoked less than daily ([table 2](#) and [figure 1](#)).
- About 1 in 4 nondaily smokers (27.0%) smoked fewer than 5 days in the past 30 days, and about 1 in 5 nondaily smokers (18.7%) smoked 21 days or more during the past 30 days ([figure 2](#)).
- Daily smokers smoked an average of 19 cigarettes a day compared with 6 cigarettes a day for nondaily smokers on days that they smoked ([table 2](#)).
- Approximately 4 in 10 current smokers (42.2%) usually smoked fewer than 15 cigarettes a day, and about 4 in 10 (39.9%) usually smoked 15–24 cigarettes a day ([table 3](#) and [figure 3](#)).
- About 3 in 10 current smokers (29.6%) started smoking before the age of 16 years ([table 4](#) and [figure 4](#)).
- About 1 in 5 current smokers (19.2%) started smoking at age 21 years or over ([table 4](#) and [figure 4](#)).
- About 4 in 10 current smokers (41.6%) attempted to quit smoking in the past year ([table 5](#)).
- Nondaily smokers (54.9%) were more likely than daily smokers (39.0%) to

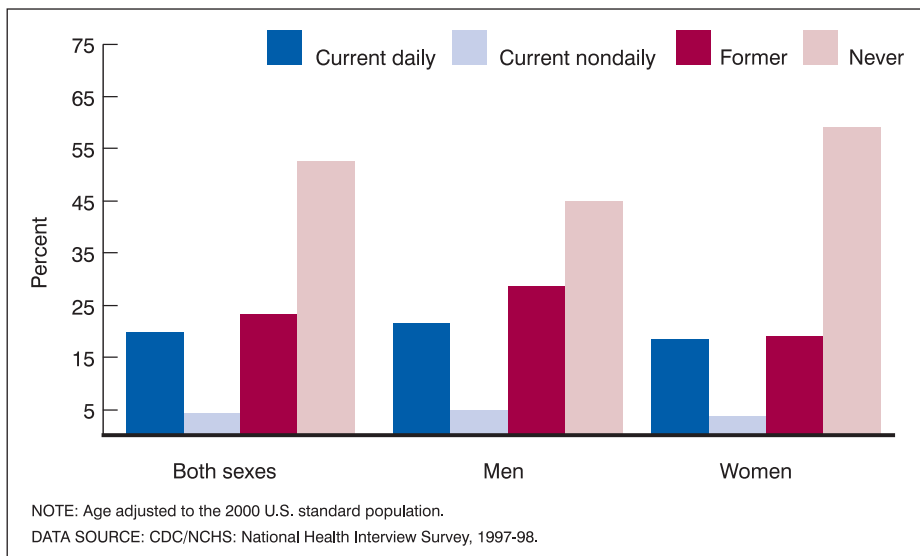


Figure 1. Percent distribution of cigarette smoking status of adults by sex: United States, 1997-98

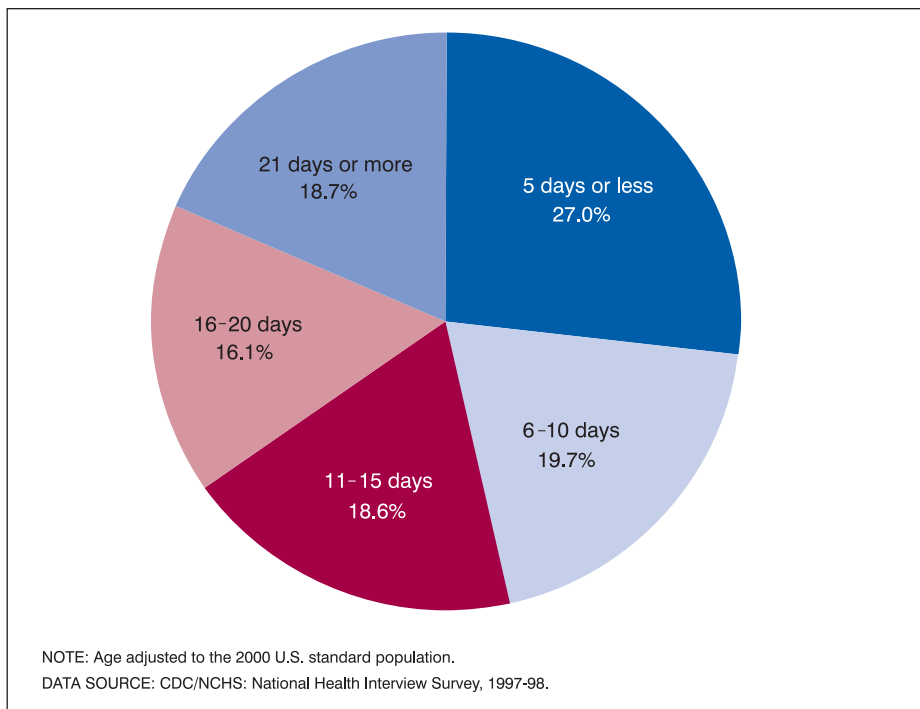


Figure 2. Percent distribution of number of days nondaily smokers smoked during the past 30 days: United States, 1997-98

have attempted to quit smoking in the past year (table 5 and figure 5).

Sex

- Men (26.4%) were more likely than women (22.1%) to be current smokers (table 1).
- Men (28.6%) were more likely than women (18.9%) to be former smokers (table 1).

- Male daily smokers smoked more cigarettes in a day (about 21 cigarettes) than female daily smokers (about 17 cigarettes) (table 2).
- Male smokers (10.6%) were twice as likely as female smokers (4.9%) to usually smoke 35 or more cigarettes in a day (table 3).
- Male smokers (33.8%) were more likely than female smokers (25.7%)

to have started smoking before the age of 16 years (table 4).

- Female smokers (22.7%) were more likely than male smokers (15.3%) to have started smoking at age 21 years and over (table 4).
- Male smokers (41.0%) and female smokers (42.3%) were equally likely to have attempted to quit smoking in the past year (table 5).

Age

- Current smoking was most prevalent among adults aged 18-24 years (28.3%) and 25-44 years (28.0%) and declined with age (table 1).
- Men aged 65-74 years (57.1%) and 75 years and over (57.7%) were more likely than men in other age groups to be former smokers (table 1).
- Women aged 65-74 years (29.3%) were more likely than women in other age groups to be former smokers (table 1).
- The mean number of cigarettes smoked in a day was higher among current smokers aged 45-64 years (19 cigarettes) than among current smokers in any other age group (table 2).
- The mean number of cigarettes smoked in a day (14 cigarettes) was lowest for the youngest and the oldest smokers compared with smokers in other age groups (table 2).
- More than one-third of current smokers aged 18-24 years (37.6%) started smoking before the age of 16 years (table 4).
- Female smokers aged 18-24 years (41.8%) were nearly three times as likely as those 65-74 years (15.6%) or those 75 years and over (15.0%) to have started smoking before age 16 years (table 4).
- Female smokers aged 75 years and over (44.7%) were more than twice as likely as those 25-44 years (17.4%) to have started smoking at 21 years of age and over (table 4).
- Among the youngest group of smokers (18-24 years of age), nondaily smokers (53.9%) and daily smokers (50.1%) were about equally likely to have attempted to quit smoking in the past year. Among older smokers, however, daily

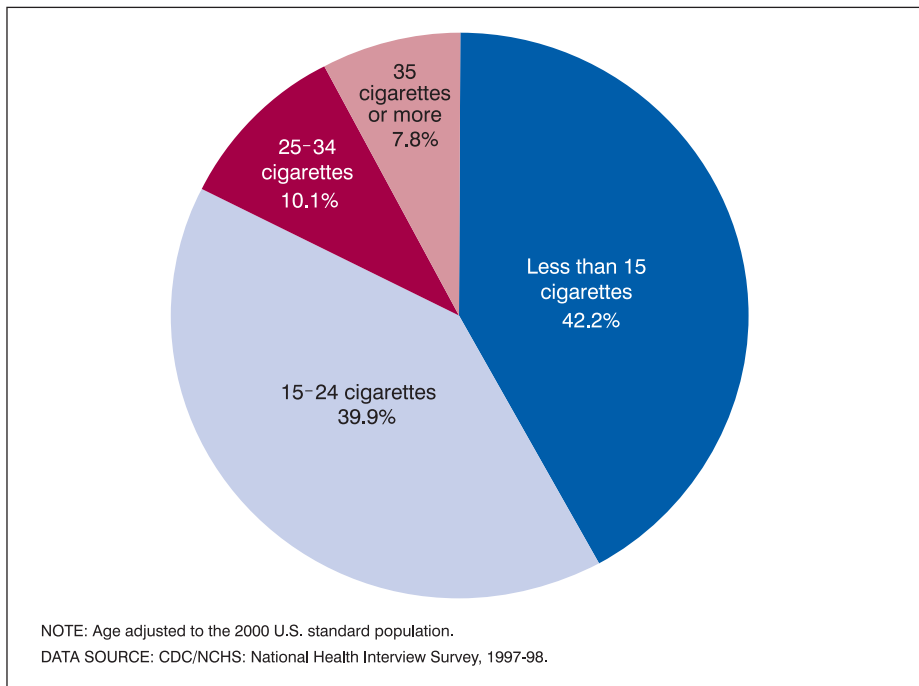


Figure 3. Percent distribution of usual number of cigarettes smoked in a day among all adult current smokers: United States, 1997-98

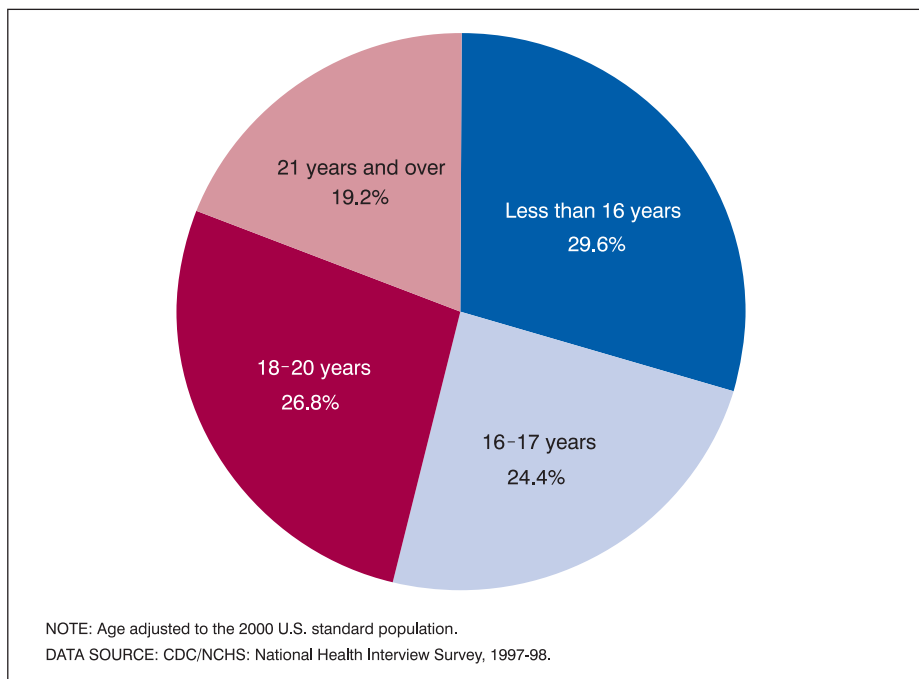


Figure 4. Percent distribution of age started smoking among all adult current smokers: United States, 1997-98

smokers were considerably less likely than nondaily smokers to have tried to quit in the past year (table 5 and figure 5).

Race/ethnicity

- Black non-Hispanic adults (25.5%) and white non-Hispanic adults (25.4%) were more likely than

Hispanic adults (18.9%) and Asian/Pacific Islander non-Hispanic adults (14.1%) to be current smokers (table 1).

- Black non-Hispanic men (30.4%) were more likely to be current smokers than any other racial/ethnic group studied (white non-Hispanic men (26.8%), Hispanic men (24.3%),

and Asian/Pacific Islander non-Hispanic men (17.9%)) (table 1).

- White non-Hispanic women (24.1%) were more likely to be current smokers than any other racial/ethnic group studied (black non-Hispanic women (21.6%), Hispanic women (13.5%), and Asian/Pacific Islander non-Hispanic women (10.7%)) (table 1).
- Black non-Hispanic men (23.3%) and white non-Hispanic men (22.8%) were about equally likely to smoke daily, but rates of nondaily smoking were higher for black non-Hispanic men (7.1%) than white non-Hispanic men (4.0%) (table 2).
- White non-Hispanic women (20.3%) were more likely than any other racial/ethnic group studied (black non-Hispanic women (17.0%), Hispanic women (9.5%), and Asian/Pacific Islander non-Hispanic women (8.7%)) to be daily smokers (table 2).
- Among the racial/ethnic groups studied, Asian/Pacific Islander non-Hispanic adults (85.9%) were the most likely to currently be nonsmokers (table 2).
- White non-Hispanic male smokers smoked about 20 cigarettes in a day and white non-Hispanic female smokers smoked about 16 cigarettes in a day. Cigarette consumption was considerably lower in the other racial/ethnic groups studied (table 2 and figure 6).
- About one-third (35.5%) of white non-Hispanic smokers usually smoked fewer than 15 cigarettes in a day compared with about two-thirds of smokers in the other racial/ethnic groups studied (table 3).
- White non-Hispanic male smokers (13.0%) were more than four times as likely as men in the other racial/ethnic groups to usually smoke an average of 35 cigarettes or more in a day (table 3).
- Asian/Pacific Islander non-Hispanic smokers (29.3%) were the most likely of the racial/ethnic groups studied to have started smoking on or after their 21st birthday (table 4).
- Nearly one-third of Hispanic smokers (31.8%) and about one-fourth of black non-Hispanic smokers (25.2%)

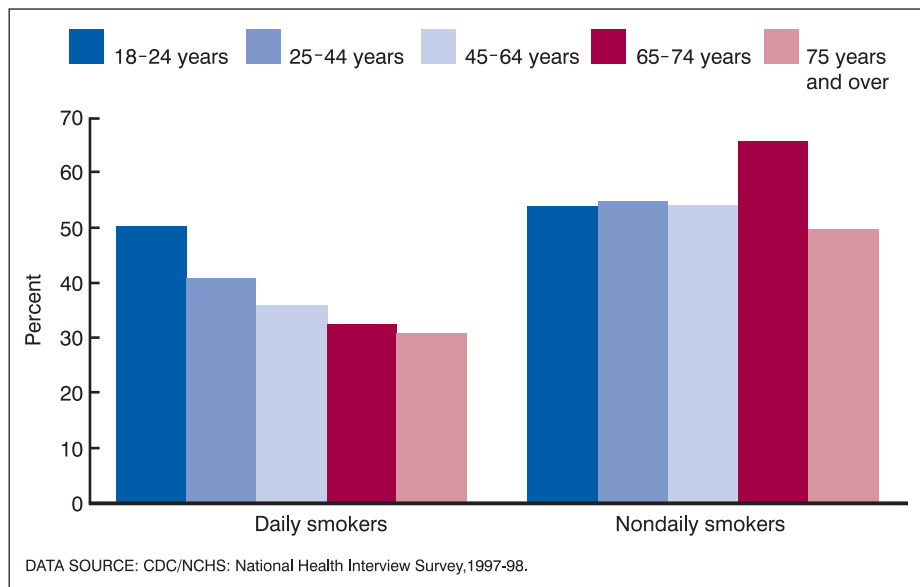


Figure 5. Percent of adult current smokers who tried to quit in past year, by smoking frequency and age: United States, 1997-98

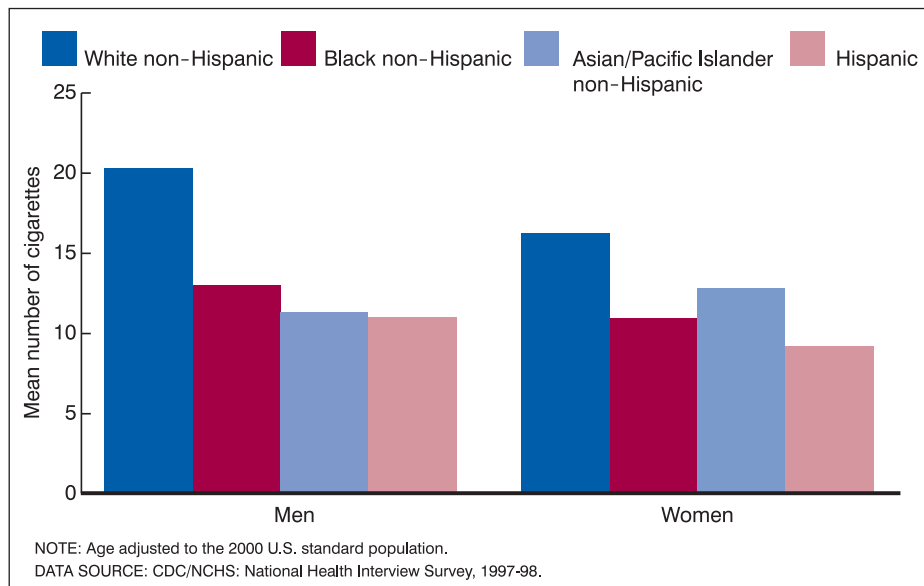


Figure 6. Mean number of cigarettes smoked by adult current smokers by sex and race/ethnicity: United States, 1997-98

started smoking before 16 years of age (table 4).

- White non-Hispanic male smokers (35.0%) were twice as likely as Asian/Pacific Islander non-Hispanic male smokers (17.1%) to have started smoking before the age of 16 years (table 4).

Education

- Adults with a bachelor of arts/science degree or higher were markedly less likely to currently smoke cigarettes

than adults with less education (table 1).

- With the exception of General Educational Development (GED) high school equivalency diploma holders, for whom current smoking rates were very high (44.3%), prevalence of current cigarette smoking declined steadily with increasing education—from 34.4% among adults with less than a high school diploma to 8.4% among adults with a masters, doctorate or medical degree (table 1).

- Four in 10 adults (40.2%) with a GED diploma were daily smokers compared with 29.2% of other nonhigh school graduates, 24.0% of high school graduates, and 4.9% of adults with advanced academic degrees (table 2).
- Men who had earned a bachelor of arts/science degree (10.1%) were more than twice as likely as men who held advanced degrees (4.4%) to be daily smokers (table 2).
- Current smokers holding a GED diploma smoked an average of about 20 cigarettes a day compared with about 18 cigarettes for other nonhigh school graduates, about 17 cigarettes a day for high school graduates, and about 13 cigarettes a day for adults achieving the highest levels of education (table 2).
- Smokers with a GED diploma (11.3%) and those with less than a high school diploma (10.7%) were more likely to usually smoke 35 cigarettes or more a day than smokers who had more years of education (table 3).
- Adults with the least education were nearly three times as likely as adults with the most education to have started smoking before the age of 16 years (table 4 and figure 7).
- Fewer than 1 in 5 smokers who had a bachelors degree (16.8%) or an advanced academic degree (14.7%) started smoking before 16 years of age (table 4 and figure 7).
- Daily smokers with higher levels of education were more likely than daily smokers with fewer years of education to have attempted to quit smoking in the past year (table 5).
- Prevalence of having attempted to quit smoking was not associated with education among nondaily smokers (table 5).

Poverty status

- Men with incomes below the poverty level (38.2%) were almost twice as likely as men in the highest income group (20.3%) to be current smokers (table 1).
- Women with incomes below the poverty level (30.7%) were almost twice as likely as women in the

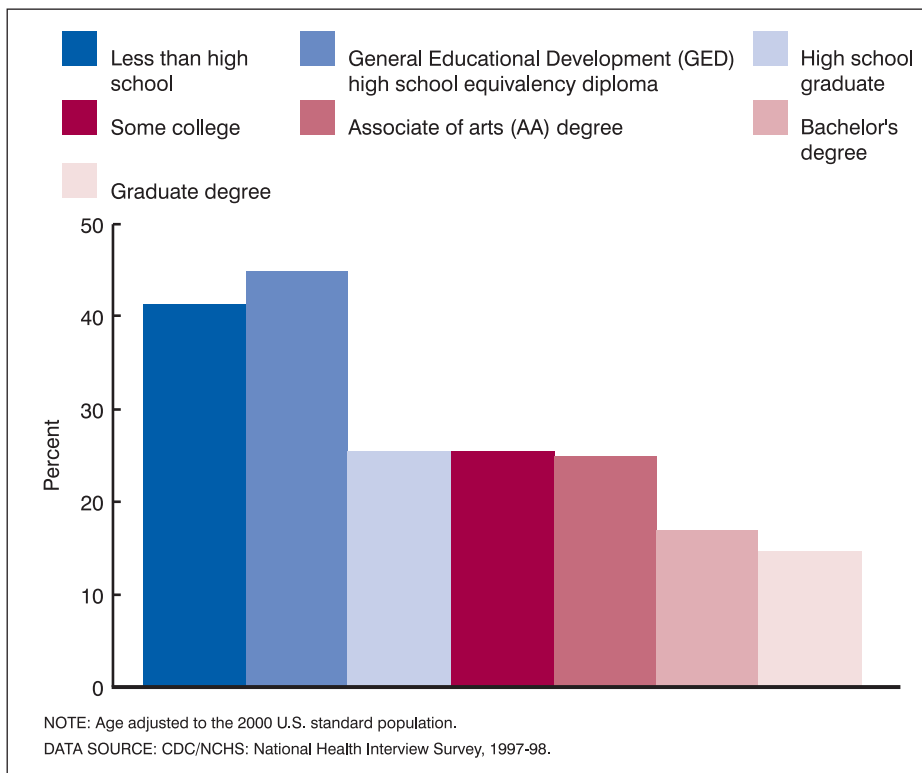


Figure 7. Percent of adult smokers who started smoking at less than 16 years of age, by level of education: United States, 1977-98

highest income group (16.3%) to be current smokers (table 1).

- Mean number of cigarettes smoked did not differ substantially by income level for either men or women (table 2).
- Smokers with the lowest incomes (below the poverty level) were more likely to have started smoking before age 16 years than were smokers in the higher income groups; income differences were greater for women than for men (table 4).
- Attempts to quit smoking were unrelated to income level (table 5).

Marital status

- Cohabiting adults (39.9%) and separated and divorced adults (36.3%) were more likely than never married adults (26.1%) and married adults (20.8%) to be current smokers (table 1).
- Prevalence of daily smoking was nearly twice as high among cohabiting adults (34.1%) as married adults (17.3%) (table 2).
- Never married smokers (45.7%) were more likely than smokers in other marital status groups to usually

smoke fewer than 15 cigarettes a day (table 3).

- Widowed smokers (53.1%) were more likely than smokers in other marital status groups to have attempted to quit smoking (table 5).

Geographic region

- Adults living in the West (20.0%) were less likely to be current smokers than those living in the Northeast (23.9%), the South (25.4%), or the Midwest (26.0%) (table 1).
- Smokers living in the West smoked an average of about 15 cigarettes a day compared with about 16 cigarettes a day for smokers living in the Northeast and about 18 cigarettes a day for smokers living in the Midwest and South (table 2).
- Over one-half (50.8%) of smokers living in the West usually smoked fewer than 15 cigarettes a day compared with 45.4% of smokers living in the Northeast, 39.3% of smokers in the South, and 38.7% of smokers in the Midwest (table 3).
- Smokers in the Midwest (27.0%) were less likely than smokers in the West (29.7%), Northeast (30.5%), and

South (30.9%) to have started smoking before 16 years of age (table 4).

- Smokers in the Northeast (46.2%) were more likely than smokers in the West (41.8%), Midwest (41.3%), and South (39.3%) to have attempted to quit smoking in the past year (table 5).

Place of residence

- Adults living outside a metropolitan statistical area (MSA) (27.3%) were more likely to be current smokers than those living in an MSA, whether in a central city (25.2%) or not in a central city (22.4%) (table 1).
- Smokers living in the central city of an MSA (48.9%) were more likely than smokers living in an MSA but not in the central city (41.8%) and those living outside an MSA (34.3%) to usually smoke fewer than 15 cigarettes a day (table 3).
- Smokers living outside an MSA (32.0%) were more likely than those living in an MSA, whether in a central city (29.3%) or not in a central city (28.5%), to have started smoking before 16 years of age (table 4).

Discussion

This report provides an overview of smoking behavior among adults in the United States in 1997-98. Although estimates of current cigarette smoking prevalence are published annually by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report (MMWRs)* and *Health, United States*, the current report goes beyond basic prevalence to describe more fully characteristics of smoking behavior of selected population subgroups.

In 1997-98, nearly 1 in 4 U.S. adults (24.2%) were current cigarette smokers. About 1 in 5 adults (19.9%) smoked cigarettes daily, and another 4.3% were nondaily smokers. Demographic patterns in adult smoking prevalence in 1997-98 were consistent with historical data (8). Cigarette smoking was more prevalent among men (26.4%) than among women (22.1%). Smoking prevalence was

higher among black non-Hispanic men (30.4%) than among white non-Hispanic men (26.8%). In contrast, smoking prevalence was lower among black non-Hispanic women (21.6%) than among white non-Hispanic women (24.1%). Asian/Pacific Islander non-Hispanic adults, both men (17.9%) and women (10.7%), had the lowest smoking prevalence of any racial/ethnic group studied. Socioeconomic and geographic differentials in smoking prevalence were in the expected directions. Smoking prevalence declined with age, education, and income level. It was highest among cohabiting, separated, and divorced adults and lowest among married adults. Smoking rates were lowest in the West region of the country and among adults living in an MSA, but outside the central city (that is, the suburbs).

Daily smokers represent 4 out of every 5 smokers. Thus, sociodemographic differentials observed for all current smokers usually follow a pattern similar to that observed for daily smokers. One exception was found: black non-Hispanic men (30.4%) were more likely than white non-Hispanic men (26.8%) to be current smokers, but rates of daily smoking were about the same for the two groups (23.3% for black non-Hispanic men and 22.8% for white non-Hispanic men). The higher rates for overall smoking prevalence among black non-Hispanic men was due to their higher rates of nondaily smoking (7.1%) compared with their white non-Hispanic counterparts (4.0%).

Estimates of the amount smoked in a day, both the mean number of cigarettes smoked (table 2) and the proportion of current smokers who usually smoked 35 cigarettes or more in a day (table 3), revealed that, to a large extent, sociodemographic patterns in the amount smoked paralleled sociodemographic patterns for smoking prevalence. On average, men smoked more cigarettes a day (about 18 cigarettes) than did women (about 15 cigarettes). Middle-aged adults, aged 45–64 years, smoked the most (about 19 cigarettes in a day) compared with adults in the other age groups. White non-Hispanic adults were heavier smokers (about 18 cigarettes in a day)

than adults in other racial/ethnic groups. Smokers living in the West and those living in a central city of an MSA smoked the fewest cigarettes, on average, compared with smokers living in other locations.

Analysis of the smoking behavior of nondaily smokers (data not shown) revealed that 9 in 10 nondaily smokers smoked fewer than 15 cigarettes on days that they smoked compared with about 4 in 10 smokers overall (table 3). Furthermore, nearly one-half of nondaily smokers smoked on no more than 10 of the past 30 days. Sociodemographic differentials in these behaviors could not be examined due to small sample size of nondaily smokers.

Examination of sociodemographic differentials in age at which smoking began (table 4) and attempting to quit smoking (table 5) provides insights into population subgroups that might benefit most from smoking intervention efforts. Young adults, Hispanic and white non-Hispanic adults, adults with the least education, those living below the poverty threshold, and those living outside an MSA were the most likely to have started smoking before the age of 16 years.

Attempts to quit smoking were more prevalent among adults who smoked some days than among those who smoked daily. Overall, 39.0% of daily smokers and 54.9% of nondaily smokers had stopped smoking for more than 1 day in the past year because they were trying to quit smoking. This finding suggests that perhaps some smokers are smoking only some days because they are trying to stop entirely. Men (41.0%) and women (42.3%) were about equally likely to have tried to quit smoking in the past year. Younger smokers were more likely than older smokers to have tried to quit smoking. This suggests that smokers who continue to smoke in their older years either have no desire to quit or believe they cannot. Although the data suggest some subgroup differences in prevalence of having attempted to quit smoking, large standard errors associated with these estimates make it difficult to make generalizations even with two years of data. However, it is clear that a substantial proportion of smokers, both

daily smokers and nondaily smokers, across all demographic subgroups, want to quit smoking.

Conclusions

Smoking behavior has been a focus of study for most of the last century, yet much remains to be understood about the characteristics of smokers. Smoking prevalence, closely tracked by Federal and State agencies, continues its downward trend, but at a much slower rate than in the past. This report cannot answer the question of why adults smoke, but it does provide important information about who is smoking, at what age they start, how often and how much they are smoking, and who is trying to quit. This information can provide valuable insights to assist policy makers and health educators in their efforts to encourage nonsmokers to stay nonsmokers and to encourage smokers to quit.

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Table 1. Percent distribution of lifetime cigarette smoking status for adults 18 years of age and over, by selected characteristics: United States, average annual, 1997–98

Selected characteristic	Lifetime cigarette smoking status ¹			
	Total	Never smoker	Former smoker	Current smoker
Both sexes				
Percent distribution (standard error)				
Ages 18 years and over (age-adjusted) ^{2,3}	100.0	52.6 (0.25)	23.2 (0.19)	24.2 (0.22)
Ages 18 years and over (crude) ²	100.0	52.7 (0.25)	22.9 (0.20)	24.4 (0.23)
Age:				
18–24 years	100.0	64.0 (0.71)	7.7 (0.38)	28.3 (0.68)
25–44 years	100.0	56.1 (0.38)	15.8 (0.25)	28.0 (0.36)
45–64 years	100.0	44.6 (0.41)	30.7 (0.39)	24.7 (0.38)
65–74 years	100.0	43.2 (0.65)	41.7 (0.68)	15.0 (0.48)
75 years and over	100.0	56.6 (0.76)	36.5 (0.77)	6.8 (0.37)
Race/ethnicity: ³				
Hispanic	100.0	63.1 (0.64)	18.0 (0.45)	18.9 (0.51)
White non-Hispanic	100.0	49.5 (0.30)	25.1 (0.23)	25.4 (0.28)
Black non-Hispanic	100.0	58.7 (0.64)	15.8 (0.43)	25.5 (0.60)
Asian/Pacific Islander non-Hispanic	100.0	70.1 (1.66)	15.8 (1.41)	14.1 (0.86)
Education: ³				
Less than high school graduate	100.0	45.6 (0.55)	20.1 (0.37)	34.4 (0.53)
GED diploma ⁴	100.0	31.3 (1.39)	24.4 (1.19)	44.3 (1.32)
High school graduate	100.0	49.4 (0.46)	22.4 (0.36)	28.2 (0.40)
Some college - no degree	100.0	50.5 (0.53)	25.2 (0.47)	24.3 (0.43)
Associate of arts degree	100.0	52.1 (0.80)	25.2 (0.62)	22.7(0.64)
Bachelor of arts, science degree	100.0	61.8 (0.60)	25.5 (0.53)	12.7 (0.40)
Masters, doctorate, medical degree	100.0	68.4 (0.91)	23.3 (0.69)	8.4 (0.63)
Poverty status: ^{3,5}				
Below poverty level	100.0	49.7 (0.70)	16.6 (0.49)	33.6 (0.61)
Poverty - 1.99 times poverty level	100.0	48.5 (0.59)	20.4 (0.45)	31.1 (0.57)
2.00–3.99 times poverty level	100.0	50.6 (0.42)	23.6 (0.37)	25.8 (0.38)
4.00 times poverty level or more	100.0	54.1 (0.47)	27.4 (0.39)	18.5 (0.36)
Marital status: ³				
Never married	100.0	57.6 (0.70)	16.3 (0.51)	26.1 (0.60)
Married	100.0	52.8 (0.36)	26.4 (0.27)	20.8 (0.28)
Cohabiting	100.0	38.3 (1.35)	21.8 (1.26)	39.9 (1.17)
Divorced or separated	100.0	42.3 (0.71)	21.4 (0.49)	36.3 (0.68)
Widowed	100.0	49.6 (3.19)	19.2 (1.11)	31.2 (3.19)
Geographic region: ³				
Northeast	100.0	51.5 (0.54)	24.7 (0.41)	23.9 (0.43)
Midwest	100.0	50.9 (0.52)	23.1 (0.37)	26.0 (0.52)
South	100.0	53.0 (0.45)	21.6 (0.33)	25.4 (0.37)
West	100.0	55.2 (0.43)	24.8 (0.41)	20.0 (0.37)
Place of residence: ³				
MSA, central city ⁶	100.0	53.3 (0.43)	21.6 (0.36)	25.2 (0.43)
MSA, not central city ⁶	100.0	53.2 (0.35)	24.3 (0.26)	22.4 (0.32)
Not MSA ⁶	100.0	49.9 (0.56)	22.8 (0.45)	27.3 (0.51)

See footnotes at end of table.

Table 1. Percent distribution of lifetime cigarette smoking status for adults 18 years of age and over, by selected characteristics: United States, average annual, 1997–98—Con.

Selected characteristic	Lifetime cigarette smoking status ¹			
	Total	Never smoker	Former smoker	Current smoker
Men				
Percent distribution (standard error)				
Ages 18 years and over (age-adjusted) ^{2,3}	100.0	45.0 (0.35)	28.6 (0.28)	26.4 (0.31)
Ages 18 years and over (crude) ²	100.0	45.8 (0.36)	27.2 (0.30)	27.0 (0.32)
Age:				
18–24 years	100.0	60.9 (1.02)	7.6 (0.55)	31.5 (1.01)
25–44 years	100.0	53.1 (0.53)	16.6 (0.37)	30.3 (0.51)
45–64 years	100.0	35.0 (0.58)	37.3 (0.58)	27.7 (0.56)
65–74 years	100.0	28.2 (0.93)	57.1 (1.00)	14.7 (0.72)
75 years and over	100.0	35.3 (1.28)	57.7 (1.39)	6.9 (0.64)
Race/ethnicity: ³				
Hispanic	100.0	51.8 (0.98)	23.9 (0.76)	24.3 (0.82)
White non-Hispanic	100.0	43.0 (0.41)	30.2 (0.34)	26.8 (0.39)
Black non-Hispanic	100.0	49.4 (0.96)	20.2 (0.80)	30.4 (0.91)
Asian/Pacific Islander non-Hispanic	100.0	57.6 (2.46)	24.5 (2.43)	17.9 (1.43)
Education: ³				
Less than high school graduate	100.0	35.2 (0.75)	26.4 (0.58)	38.4 (0.78)
GED diploma ⁴	100.0	22.0 (1.73)	29.6 (1.71)	48.4 (1.80)
High school graduate	100.0	40.0 (0.67)	29.1 (0.60)	30.9 (0.60)
Some college - no degree	100.0	43.7 (0.76)	29.6 (0.71)	26.7 (0.65)
Associate of arts degree	100.0	45.9 (1.12)	31.0 (0.99)	23.1 (0.94)
Bachelor of arts, science degree	100.0	56.1 (0.90)	30.0 (0.80)	13.9 (0.63)
Masters, doctorate, medical degree	100.0	65.5 (1.58)	25.4 (1.06)	9.1 (1.24)
Poverty status: ^{3,5}				
Below poverty level	100.0	39.7 (1.09)	22.1 (0.96)	38.2 (1.02)
Poverty - 1.99 times poverty level	100.0	39.2 (0.85)	25.3 (0.74)	35.5 (0.83)
2.00–3.99 times poverty level	100.0	42.9 (0.59)	29.0 (0.59)	28.1 (0.56)
4.00 times poverty level or more	100.0	48.3 (0.69)	31.3 (0.55)	20.3 (0.52)
Marital status: ³				
Never married.	100.0	50.2 (0.98)	20.0 (0.83)	29.8 (0.83)
Married	100.0	45.1 (0.52)	31.2 (0.41)	23.7 (0.45)
Cohabiting	100.0	34.1 (1.58)	23.5 (1.58)	42.4 (1.51)
Divorced or separated.	100.0	34.5 (1.21)	25.2 (0.87)	40.3 (1.19)
Widowed	100.0	37.9 (5.57)	24.8 (1.97)	37.3 (5.73)
Geographic region: ³				
Northeast	100.0	45.7 (0.65)	29.5 (0.47)	24.9 (0.59)
Midwest	100.0	43.8 (0.70)	28.2 (0.58)	28.0 (0.70)
South	100.0	43.9 (0.61)	27.7 (0.47)	28.4 (0.53)
West	100.0	48.1 (0.78)	29.7 (0.63)	22.2 (0.59)
Place of residence: ³				
MSA, central city ⁶	100.0	45.9 (0.64)	26.5 (0.57)	27.5 (0.58)
MSA, not central city ⁶	100.0	46.2 (0.47)	29.4 (0.40)	24.4 (0.45)
Not MSA ⁶	100.0	41.1 (0.79)	29.3 (0.57)	29.6 (0.71)

See footnotes at end of table.

Table 1. Percent distribution of lifetime cigarette smoking status for adults 18 years of age and over, by selected characteristics: United States, average annual, 1997–98—Con.

Selected characteristic	Lifetime cigarette smoking status ¹			
	Total	Never smoker	Former smoker	Current smoker
Women				
Percent distribution (standard error)				
Ages 18 years and over (age-adjusted ^{2,3})	100.0	59.0 (0.33)	18.9 (0.25)	22.1 (0.27)
Ages 18 years and over (crude) ²	100.0	59.1 (0.33)	18.9 (0.25)	22.0 (0.27)
Age:				
18–24 years	100.0	67.1 (1.04)	7.8 (0.55)	25.1 (0.88)
25–44 years	100.0	59.1 (0.49)	15.1 (0.34)	25.8 (0.42)
45–64 years	100.0	53.5 (0.56)	24.5 (0.50)	22.0 (0.48)
65–74 years	100.0	55.5 (0.83)	29.3 (0.82)	15.3 (0.61)
75 years and over	100.0	70.2 (0.86)	23.1 (0.80)	6.7 (0.45)
Race/ethnicity: ³				
Hispanic	100.0	73.7 (0.68)	12.8 (0.53)	13.5 (0.52)
White non-Hispanic	100.0	55.0 (0.40)	21.0 (0.31)	24.1 (0.34)
Black non-Hispanic	100.0	65.8 (0.82)	12.6 (0.47)	21.6 (0.66)
Asian/Pacific Islander non-Hispanic	100.0	81.6 (1.79)	7.7 (1.12)	10.7 (1.26)
Education: ³				
Less than high school graduate	100.0	54.7 (0.74)	14.9 (0.46)	30.4 (0.69)
GED diploma ⁴	100.0	42.4 (1.91)	18.1 (1.57)	39.5 (1.82)
High school graduate	100.0	56.2 (0.60)	17.9 (0.41)	25.9 (0.52)
Some college - no degree	100.0	56.5 (0.67)	21.6 (0.59)	22.0 (0.56)
Associate of arts degree	100.0	56.6 (1.15)	21.1 (0.89)	22.3 (0.85)
Bachelor of arts, science degree	100.0	67.9 (0.84)	20.6 (0.73)	11.5 (0.52)
Masters, doctorate, medical degree	100.0	71.4 (1.08)	20.4 (0.85)	8.2 (0.77)
Poverty status: ^{3,5}				
Below poverty level	100.0	55.3 (0.83)	14.0 (0.54)	30.7 (0.73)
Poverty - 1.99 times poverty level	100.0	55.5 (0.75)	17.1 (0.57)	27.4 (0.74)
2.00–3.99 times poverty level	100.0	57.8 (0.54)	18.6 (0.45)	23.6 (0.50)
4.00 times poverty level or more	100.0	60.7 (0.71)	22.9 (0.60)	16.3 (0.50)
Marital status: ³				
Never married	100.0	64.5 (0.91)	13.3 (0.64)	22.2 (0.75)
Married	100.0	61.0 (0.46)	20.5 (0.37)	18.4 (0.35)
Cohabiting	100.0	45.6 (1.90)	17.2 (1.46)	37.2 (1.80)
Divorced or separated	100.0	47.1 (0.91)	19.2 (0.60)	33.7 (0.90)
Widowed	100.0	54.2 (2.58)	18.0 (1.30)	27.8 (2.56)
Geographic region: ³				
Northeast	100.0	56.1 (0.77)	21.0 (0.54)	22.9 (0.55)
Midwest	100.0	57.0 (0.67)	19.0 (0.47)	24.0 (0.63)
South	100.0	60.8 (0.59)	16.6 (0.40)	22.6 (0.49)
West	100.0	61.6 (0.61)	20.7 (0.65)	17.8 (0.43)
Place of residence: ³				
MSA, central city ⁶	100.0	59.2 (0.56)	17.8 (0.42)	23.0 (0.51)
MSA, not central city ⁶	100.0	59.4 (0.47)	20.2 (0.35)	20.4 (0.37)
Not MSA ⁶	100.0	57.4 (0.72)	17.5 (0.62)	25.1 (0.65)

¹Lifetime cigarette smoking status: Never smoker: never smoked at all or smoked less than 100 cigarettes in lifetime; Former smoker: smoked at least 100 cigarettes in lifetime but did not smoke at time of interview; Current smoker: smoked at least 100 cigarettes in lifetime and currently smoked.

²Persons of other races and unknown race and ethnicity, unknown education, unknown poverty status, and unknown marital status are included in the total, but not shown separately.

³Age adjusted to the 2000 projected U.S. population using age groups 18–24 years, 25–44 years, 45–64 years, 65–74 years, and 75 years and over.

⁴GED is General Educational Development high school equivalency diploma.

⁵Poverty status is based on family income and family size using the U.S. Census Bureau poverty thresholds for 1996 and 1997.

⁶MSA is metropolitan statistical area (see Technical Notes).

NOTE: Denominator for each percent distribution excludes persons with unknown smoking status.

Table 2. Percent distribution of current cigarette smoking status for adults aged 18 years and over and mean number of cigarettes smoked in a day among current smokers aged 18 years and over, by selected characteristics: United States, average annual, 1997–98

Selected characteristic	Total	Nonsmoker	Nondaily smoker	Daily smoker	All current smokers	Nondaily smokers	Daily smokers
					Percent distribution (standard error)		
Both sexes							
Ages 18 years and over (age-adjusted) ^{1,2}	100.0	75.8 (0.22)	4.3 (0.09)	19.9 (0.21)	16.8 (0.12)	5.7 (0.14)	18.9 (0.12)
Ages 18 years and over (crude) ¹	100.0	75.6 (0.23)	4.4 (0.10)	20.1 (0.22)	16.8 (0.12)	5.7 (0.13)	19.0 (0.13)
Age:							
18–24 years	100.0	71.7 (0.68)	6.1 (0.37)	22.2 (0.67)	13.5 (0.29)	5.1 (0.35)	15.7 (0.30)
25–44 years	100.0	72.0 (0.36)	5.4 (0.15)	22.7 (0.35)	16.4 (0.16)	5.5 (0.18)	18.8 (0.16)
45–64 years	100.0	75.3 (0.38)	3.5 (0.15)	21.2 (0.36)	19.3 (0.22)	6.4 (0.30)	21.3 (0.22)
65–74 years	100.0	85.0 (0.48)	2.3 (0.19)	12.7 (0.44)	17.0 (0.42)	6.2 (0.63)	18.8 (0.44)
75 years and over	100.0	93.2 (0.37)	1.0 (0.13)	5.8 (0.33)	14.3 (0.56)	4.3 (0.55)	15.8 (0.57)
Race/ethnicity: ²							
Hispanic	100.0	81.1 (0.51)	5.8 (0.24)	13.2 (0.44)	10.3 (0.25)	4.3 (0.30)	12.7 (0.31)
White non-Hispanic	100.0	74.6 (0.28)	3.9 (0.11)	21.5 (0.27)	18.2 (0.14)	6.0 (0.17)	20.2 (0.14)
Black non-Hispanic	100.0	74.5 (0.60)	5.7 (0.32)	19.7 (0.50)	12.0 (0.21)	5.7 (0.34)	13.8 (0.23)
Asian/Pacific Islander non-Hispanic	100.0	85.9 (0.86)	3.1 (0.61)	11.0 (0.79)	11.6 (0.53)	5.3 (0.70)	12.9 (0.52)
Education: ²							
Less than high school graduate	100.0	65.6 (0.53)	5.1 (0.24)	29.2 (0.50)	18.0 (0.25)	6.0 (0.35)	19.8 (0.26)
GED diploma ³	100.0	55.7 (1.32)	4.1 (0.52)	40.2 (1.31)	19.8 (0.56)	5.3 (0.59)	21.1 (0.58)
High school graduate	100.0	71.8 (0.40)	4.3 (0.16)	24.0 (0.39)	17.1 (0.18)	6.4 (0.28)	18.8 (0.19)
Some college - no degree	100.0	75.7 (0.43)	4.8 (0.22)	19.5 (0.41)	16.4 (0.29)	5.3 (0.22)	18.8 (0.27)
Associate of arts degree	100.0	77.3 (0.64)	4.4 (0.32)	18.3 (0.61)	15.5 (0.40)	5.7 (0.40)	17.6 (0.42)
Bachelor of arts, science degree	100.0	87.3 (0.40)	3.6 (0.23)	9.1 (0.35)	13.9 (0.36)	5.5 (0.67)	17.0 (0.39)
Masters, doctorate, medical degree	100.0	91.6 (0.63)	3.5 (0.48)	4.9 (0.42)	12.6 (0.59)	5.0 (0.48)	17.2 (0.59)
Poverty status: ^{2,4}							
Below poverty level	100.0	66.4 (0.61)	5.4 (0.28)	28.2 (0.59)	16.7 (0.33)	5.9 (0.37)	18.7 (0.35)
Poverty - 1.99 times poverty level	100.0	68.9 (0.57)	4.6 (0.25)	26.5 (0.54)	17.1 (0.26)	5.8 (0.40)	18.9 (0.25)
2.00–3.99 times poverty level	100.0	74.2 (0.38)	4.2 (0.18)	21.6 (0.36)	17.4 (0.21)	5.6 (0.30)	19.4 (0.22)
4.00 times poverty level or more	100.0	81.5 (0.36)	3.9 (0.18)	14.5 (0.33)	15.9 (0.25)	5.3 (0.24)	18.4 (0.27)
Marital status: ²							
Never married	100.0	73.9 (0.60)	5.7 (0.27)	20.4 (0.54)	15.9 (0.33)	7.4 (0.50)	18.0 (0.36)
Married	100.0	79.2 (0.28)	3.5 (0.12)	17.3 (0.27)	17.2 (0.18)	5.2 (0.22)	19.3 (0.19)
Cohabiting	100.0	60.1 (1.17)	5.8 (0.55)	34.1 (1.17)	17.9 (0.64)	6.4 (0.48)	19.4 (0.71)
Divorced or separated	100.0	63.7 (0.68)	5.4 (0.28)	30.9 (0.66)	17.8 (0.29)	5.8 (0.40)	19.8 (0.30)
Widowed	100.0	68.8 (3.19)	4.7 (0.91)	26.5 (3.16)	16.9 (0.54)	6.2 (0.71)	18.6 (0.55)
Region: ²							
Northeast	100.0	76.1 (0.43)	4.4 (0.24)	19.4 (0.44)	15.8 (0.20)	5.4 (0.27)	17.9 (0.22)
Midwest	100.0	74.0 (0.52)	4.5 (0.21)	21.5 (0.49)	17.5 (0.23)	6.2 (0.30)	19.6 (0.21)
South	100.0	74.6 (0.37)	4.1 (0.14)	21.3 (0.36)	17.6 (0.22)	5.9 (0.23)	19.6 (0.23)
West	100.0	80.0 (0.37)	4.2 (0.19)	15.8 (0.33)	14.7 (0.24)	4.8 (0.25)	16.9 (0.26)
Place of residence: ²							
MSA, central city ⁵	100.0	74.8 (0.43)	5.1 (0.18)	20.1 (0.40)	15.4 (0.21)	5.4 (0.23)	17.6 (0.23)
MSA, not central city ⁵	100.0	77.6 (0.32)	4.0 (0.13)	18.4 (0.32)	16.6 (0.17)	5.7 (0.24)	18.7 (0.17)
Not MSA ⁵	100.0	72.7 (0.51)	3.9 (0.19)	23.4 (0.49)	18.9 (0.28)	6.3 (0.34)	20.7 (0.28)

See footnotes at end of table.

Table 2. Percent distribution of current cigarette smoking status for adults aged 18 years and over and mean number of cigarettes smoked in a day among current smokers aged 18 years and over, by selected characteristics: United States, average annual, 1997–98—Con.

Selected characteristic	Total	Nonsmoker	Nondaily smoker	Daily smoker	All current smokers	Nondaily smokers	Daily smokers
					Percent distribution (standard error)		
Men							
Ages 18 years and over (age-adjusted) ^{1,2}	100.0	73.6 (0.31)	4.7 (0.14)	21.7 (0.30)	18.4 (0.17)	6.2 (0.22)	20.6 (0.18)
Ages 18 years and over (crude) ¹	100.0	73.0 (0.32)	4.9 (0.14)	22.1 (0.31)	18.2 (0.17)	6.1 (0.20)	20.7 (0.18)
Age:							
18–24 years	100.0	68.5 (1.01)	7.0 (0.55)	24.5 (0.99)	14.4 (0.40)	5.7 (0.54)	16.7 (0.42)
25–44 years	100.0	69.7 (0.51)	6.1 (0.23)	24.2 (0.49)	17.7 (0.21)	5.9 (0.26)	20.4 (0.21)
45–64 years	100.0	72.3 (0.56)	3.8 (0.24)	23.9 (0.51)	21.0 (0.32)	7.1 (0.47)	23.0 (0.32)
65–74 years	100.0	85.3 (0.72)	2.0 (0.27)	12.7 (0.68)	19.7 (0.64)	7.1 (0.96)	21.4 (0.66)
75 years and over	100.0	93.1 (0.64)	0.9 (0.19)	6.0 (0.60)	16.8 (0.95)	3.9 (1.12)	18.6 (0.95)
Race/ethnicity: ²							
Hispanic	100.0	75.7 (0.82)	7.5 (0.43)	16.8 (0.70)	11.0 (0.36)	4.5 (0.39)	13.5 (0.44)
White non-Hispanic	100.0	73.2 (0.39)	4.0 (0.16)	22.8 (0.37)	20.3 (0.20)	6.7 (0.30)	22.4 (0.20)
Black non-Hispanic	100.0	69.6 (0.91)	7.1 (0.51)	23.3 (0.79)	13.0 (0.30)	6.3 (0.50)	14.8 (0.32)
Asian/Pacific Islander non-Hispanic	100.0	82.1 (1.43)	4.3 (0.78)	13.6 (1.32)	11.3 (0.67)	5.5 (0.83)	12.5 (0.69)
Education: ²							
Less than high school graduate	100.0	61.6 (0.78)	5.8 (0.37)	32.6 (0.76)	19.3 (0.36)	6.3 (0.52)	21.2 (0.37)
GED diploma ³	100.0	51.6 (1.80)	4.4 (0.77)	44.0 (1.83)	21.0 (0.71)	6.5 (0.68)	22.2 (0.73)
High school graduate	100.0	69.1 (0.60)	4.9 (0.27)	26.0 (0.60)	18.8 (0.29)	7.0 (0.45)	20.7 (0.29)
Some college - no degree	100.0	73.3 (0.65)	5.4 (0.35)	21.3 (0.59)	18.0 (0.43)	6.0 (0.34)	20.4 (0.44)
Associate of arts degree	100.0	76.9 (0.94)	4.1 (0.45)	19.0 (0.92)	17.9 (0.66)	5.9 (0.68)	20.3 (0.67)
Bachelor of arts, science degree	100.0	86.1 (0.63)	3.8 (0.33)	10.1 (0.56)	15.2 (0.56)	5.4 (0.52)	18.5 (0.61)
Masters, doctorate, medical degree	100.0	90.9 (1.24)	4.7 (1.15)	4.4 (0.40)	13.2 (0.69)	5.5 (0.68)	18.6 (0.90)
Poverty status: ^{2,4}							
Below poverty level	100.0	61.8 (1.02)	6.9 (0.52)	31.3 (0.97)	18.4 (0.56)	6.6 (0.60)	21.1 (0.64)
Poverty - 1.99 times poverty level	100.0	64.5 (0.83)	5.2 (0.37)	30.3 (0.82)	18.3 (0.37)	6.0 (0.57)	20.1 (0.38)
2.00–3.99 times poverty level	100.0	71.9 (0.56)	4.5 (0.26)	23.7 (0.54)	19.1 (0.33)	5.9 (0.38)	21.2 (0.34)
4.00 times poverty level or more	100.0	79.7 (0.52)	4.3 (0.26)	16.0 (0.49)	17.6 (0.35)	6.0 (0.37)	20.3 (0.35)
Marital status: ²							
Never married	100.0	70.2 (0.83)	6.6 (0.43)	23.3 (0.74)	17.4 (0.48)	8.1 (0.71)	19.7 (0.53)
Married	100.0	76.3 (0.45)	4.0 (0.21)	19.7 (0.42)	18.6 (0.25)	5.7 (0.33)	20.8 (0.25)
Cohabiting	100.0	57.6 (1.51)	6.1 (0.78)	36.3 (1.57)	19.5 (0.78)	6.9 (0.67)	21.2 (0.90)
Divorced or separated	100.0	59.7 (1.19)	6.0 (0.49)	34.3 (1.19)	19.9 (0.58)	6.1 (0.50)	22.1 (0.58)
Widowed	100.0	62.7 (5.73)	*5.3 (2.67)	31.9 (5.81)	18.8 (1.28)	5.5 (1.38)	20.8 (1.37)
Region: ²							
Northeast	100.0	75.1 (0.59)	4.8 (0.35)	20.1 (0.57)	17.6 (0.39)	6.3 (0.57)	19.9 (0.41)
Midwest	100.0	72.0 (0.70)	4.6 (0.29)	23.4 (0.68)	19.5 (0.33)	6.6 (0.48)	21.6 (0.32)
South	100.0	71.6 (0.53)	4.9 (0.22)	23.4 (0.52)	18.9 (0.30)	6.6 (0.32)	21.2 (0.31)
West	100.0	77.8 (0.59)	4.6 (0.28)	17.6 (0.53)	16.1 (0.33)	5.3 (0.35)	18.4 (0.39)
Place of residence: ²							
MSA, central city ⁵	100.0	72.5 (0.58)	5.5 (0.26)	22.0 (0.58)	16.7 (0.33)	5.9 (0.35)	19.1 (0.35)
MSA, not central city ⁵	100.0	75.6 (0.45)	4.5 (0.20)	20.0 (0.43)	18.2 (0.24)	6.3 (0.37)	20.4 (0.24)
Not MSA ⁵	100.0	70.4 (0.71)	4.3 (0.28)	25.3 (0.69)	20.8 (0.38)	6.8 (0.43)	22.8 (0.39)

See footnotes at end of table.

Table 2. Percent distribution of current cigarette smoking status for adults aged 18 years and over and mean number of cigarettes smoked in a day among current smokers aged 18 years and over, by selected characteristics: United States, average annual, 1997–98—Con.

Selected characteristic	Total	Percent distribution (standard error)			Mean number of cigarettes in a day (standard error)		
		Nonsmoker	Nondaily smoker	Daily smoker	All current smokers	Nondaily smokers	Daily smokers
Women							
Ages 18 years and over (age-adjusted) ^{1,2} . . .	100.0	77.9 (0.27)	3.9 (0.12)	18.2 (0.26)	15.1 (0.14)	5.2 (0.19)	17.0 (0.14)
Ages 18 years and over (crude) ¹	100.0	78.0 (0.27)	3.9 (0.12)	18.2 (0.26)	15.2 (0.13)	5.1 (0.17)	17.1 (0.14)
Age:							
18–24 years	100.0	74.9 (0.88)	5.2 (0.46)	19.9 (0.85)	12.5 (0.34)	4.3 (0.37)	14.5 (0.35)
25–44 years	100.0	74.2 (0.42)	4.7 (0.19)	21.1 (0.41)	14.9 (0.19)	5.1 (0.24)	16.9 (0.21)
45–64 years	100.0	78.0 (0.48)	3.3 (0.19)	18.7 (0.45)	17.3 (0.26)	5.7 (0.34)	19.1 (0.26)
65–74 years	100.0	84.7 (0.61)	2.6 (0.26)	12.7 (0.56)	14.9 (0.51)	5.6 (0.81)	16.7 (0.55)
75 years and over	100.0	93.3 (0.45)	1.1 (0.21)	5.6 (0.40)	12.6 (0.61)	4.5 (1.18)	13.9 (0.62)
Race/ethnicity: ²							
Hispanic	100.0	86.5 (0.52)	4.0 (0.29)	9.5 (0.46)	9.2 (0.35)	3.8 (0.37)	11.3 (0.44)
White non-Hispanic	100.0	75.9 (0.34)	3.8 (0.15)	20.3 (0.33)	16.2 (0.16)	5.3 (0.23)	18.0 (0.16)
Black non-Hispanic	100.0	78.4 (0.66)	4.6 (0.32)	17.0 (0.60)	10.9 (0.33)	4.9 (0.30)	12.6 (0.37)
Asian/Pacific Islander non-Hispanic	100.0	89.3 (1.26)	*2.0 (0.82)	8.7 (1.02)	12.8 (0.90)	5.2 (1.13)	13.9 (0.95)
Education: ²							
Less than high school graduate	100.0	69.6 (0.69)	4.4 (0.31)	26.0 (0.65)	16.4 (0.30)	5.7 (0.50)	18.0 (0.31)
GED diploma ³	100.0	60.5 (1.82)	4.0 (0.69)	35.5 (1.84)	17.6 (0.87)	4.3 (0.49)	19.1 (0.86)
High school graduate	100.0	74.1 (0.52)	3.7 (0.20)	22.2 (0.52)	15.5 (0.20)	5.7 (0.37)	17.0 (0.22)
Some college - no degree	100.0	78.0 (0.56)	4.3 (0.27)	17.7 (0.52)	14.8 (0.34)	4.6 (0.27)	17.1 (0.31)
Associate of arts degree	100.0	77.7 (0.85)	4.6 (0.45)	17.7 (0.82)	13.4 (0.39)	5.8 (0.56)	15.2 (0.41)
Bachelor of arts, science degree	100.0	88.5 (0.52)	3.4 (0.30)	8.2 (0.44)	12.6 (0.46)	4.9 (0.78)	15.4 (0.50)
Masters, doctorate, medical degree	100.0	91.8 (0.77)	2.7 (0.35)	5.4 (0.69)	12.3 (0.53)	4.7 (0.59)	15.5 (0.66)
Poverty status: ^{2,4}							
Below poverty level	100.0	69.3 (0.73)	4.5 (0.30)	26.3 (0.73)	15.3 (0.35)	5.2 (0.36)	17.0 (0.36)
Poverty - 1.99 times poverty level	100.0	72.6 (0.74)	4.1 (0.32)	23.3 (0.66)	15.9 (0.33)	5.6 (0.55)	17.5 (0.33)
2.00–3.99 times poverty level	100.0	76.4 (0.50)	3.9 (0.23)	19.7 (0.48)	15.5 (0.27)	5.2 (0.39)	17.4 (0.27)
4.00 times poverty level or more	100.0	83.7 (0.50)	3.5 (0.23)	12.9 (0.46)	13.6 (0.31)	4.2 (0.25)	15.8 (0.35)
Marital status: ²							
Never married	100.0	77.8 (0.75)	4.8 (0.35)	17.4 (0.68)	13.7 (0.42)	5.3 (0.54)	15.6 (0.42)
Married	100.0	81.6 (0.35)	3.1 (0.16)	15.3 (0.34)	15.4 (0.23)	4.6 (0.26)	17.4 (0.23)
Cohabiting	100.0	62.8 (1.80)	5.3 (0.70)	31.9 (1.79)	14.6 (0.57)	4.8 (0.45)	15.8 (0.59)
Divorced or separated	100.0	66.3 (0.90)	4.9 (0.34)	28.7 (0.86)	16.2 (0.28)	5.6 (0.54)	18.0 (0.30)
Widowed	100.0	72.2 (2.56)	4.5 (0.91)	23.3 (2.47)	16.4 (0.59)	6.5 (0.85)	18.0 (0.61)
Region: ²							
Northeast	100.0	77.1 (0.55)	4.1 (0.32)	18.8 (0.56)	14.2 (0.29)	4.8 (0.26)	16.1 (0.29)
Midwest	100.0	76.0 (0.63)	4.4 (0.25)	19.6 (0.58)	15.5 (0.25)	5.9 (0.39)	17.5 (0.25)
South	100.0	77.4 (0.49)	3.4 (0.20)	19.2 (0.44)	16.2 (0.25)	5.3 (0.42)	17.9 (0.26)
West	100.0	82.2 (0.43)	3.7 (0.22)	14.0 (0.40)	13.2 (0.26)	4.2 (0.34)	15.3 (0.28)
Place of residence: ²							
MSA, central city ⁵	100.0	77.0 (0.51)	4.6 (0.24)	18.4 (0.45)	14.0 (0.25)	4.9 (0.29)	16.1 (0.28)
MSA, not central city ⁵	100.0	79.6 (0.37)	3.5 (0.17)	16.9 (0.36)	15.0 (0.19)	5.1 (0.29)	16.9 (0.20)
Not MSA ⁵	100.0	74.9 (0.65)	3.5 (0.22)	21.6 (0.65)	16.8 (0.32)	5.9 (0.51)	18.4 (0.29)

* Figure does not meet standards of reliability or precision (see Technical Notes).

¹Persons of other races and unknown race and ethnicity, unknown education, unknown poverty status, and unknown marital status are included in the total, but not shown separately.

²Age adjusted to the 2000 projected U.S. population using age groups 18–24 years, 25–44 years, 45–64 years, 65–74 years, and 75 years and over.

³GED is General Educational Development high school equivalency diploma.

⁴Poverty status is based on family income and family size using the U.S. Census Bureau poverty thresholds for 1996 and 1997.

⁵MSA is metropolitan statistical area (see Technical Notes).

NOTES: Current cigarette smoking status: Nonsmoker includes never smokers and former smokers; Daily smokers: currently smoked everyday; Nondaily smokers: currently smoked some days, regardless of number of days they smoked.

Denominator for each percent distribution excludes persons with unknown current smoking status.

Denominators for mean number of cigarettes smoked in a day exclude smokers (daily and nondaily) with unknown number of cigarettes smoked and nondaily smokers who did not smoke in the past 30 days. Estimates reflect usual cigarette consumption on days smoked and do not reflect consumption over a period of time such as a week or a month.

Table 3. Percent distribution of usual number of cigarettes smoked in a day among current smokers aged 18 years and over, by selected characteristics: United States, average annual, 1997–98

Selected characteristic	Usual number of cigarettes smoked in a day ¹				
	Total	Less than 15	15–24	25–34	35 or more
Both sexes					
Percent distribution (standard error)					
Ages 18 years and over (age-adjusted) ^{2,3}	100.0	42.2 (0.52)	39.9 (0.49)	10.1 (0.31)	7.8 (0.27)
Ages 18 years and over (crude) ²	100.0	42.1 (0.50)	40.0 (0.45)	10.2 (0.30)	7.7 (0.26)
Age:					
18–24 years	100.0	55.3 (1.47)	35.7 (1.33)	6.7 (0.78)	2.4 (0.43)
25–44 years	100.0	42.6 (0.72)	40.6 (0.68)	9.9 (0.43)	6.9 (0.34)
45–64 years	100.0	33.5 (0.80)	41.7 (0.81)	12.8 (0.59)	11.9 (0.56)
65–74 years	100.0	43.1 (1.81)	37.1 (1.69)	10.8 (1.25)	9.0 (1.02)
75 years and over	100.0	50.2 (2.96)	39.8 (2.93)	5.4 (1.19)	4.6 (1.23)
Race/ethnicity: ³					
Hispanic	100.0	69.5 (1.36)	25.5 (1.30)	2.9 (0.41)	2.2 (0.47)
White non-Hispanic	100.0	35.5 (0.59)	43.3 (0.56)	12.0 (0.37)	9.3 (0.33)
Black non-Hispanic	100.0	65.5 (1.13)	28.3 (1.10)	3.7 (0.54)	2.5 (0.34)
Asian/Pacific Islander non-Hispanic	100.0	67.4 (3.18)	28.8 (3.15)	*1.7 (0.85)	*2.1(0.73)
Education: ³					
Less than high school graduate	100.0	39.3 (0.93)	39.3 (0.90)	10.7 (0.55)	10.7 (0.64)
GED diploma ⁴	100.0	30.0 (2.52)	44.3 (2.82)	14.4 (2.15)	11.3 (1.43)
High school graduate	100.0	40.0 (0.80)	42.2 (0.81)	10.6 (0.53)	7.1 (0.39)
Some college - no degree	100.0	43.0 (1.22)	39.9 (1.19)	10.1 (0.66)	7.0 (0.73)
Associate of arts degree	100.0	49.1 (1.84)	35.5 (1.66)	7.9 (0.87)	7.5 (0.90)
Bachelor of arts, science degree	100.0	52.7 (1.83)	34.7 (1.90)	7.9 (0.92)	4.7 (0.76)
Masters, doctorate, medical degree	100.0	58.7 (3.74)	32.7 (3.69)	4.5 (0.93)	4.1 (0.89)
Poverty status: ^{3,5}					
Below poverty level	100.0	45.8 (1.24)	36.2 (1.08)	9.3 (0.64)	8.6 (0.72)
Poverty - 1.99 times poverty level	100.0	40.9 (1.05)	41.1 (1.00)	9.4 (0.61)	8.7 (0.62)
2.00–3.99 times poverty level	100.0	40.2 (0.92)	39.7 (0.90)	11.3 (0.61)	8.8 (0.55)
4.00 times poverty level or more	100.0	44.9 (1.36)	39.5 (1.32)	9.4 (0.58)	6.2 (0.46)
Marital status: ³					
Never married	100.0	45.7 (1.36)	38.8 (1.49)	9.4 (1.16)	6.0 (0.63)
Married	100.0	40.3 (0.79)	40.7 (0.77)	10.4 (0.45)	8.6 (0.43)
Cohabiting	100.0	38.7 (2.24)	42.4 (3.32)	10.0 (1.10)	8.9 (2.49)
Divorced or separated	100.0	37.2 (1.20)	43.4 (1.23)	9.9 (0.78)	9.5 (0.78)
Widowed	100.0	39.1 (2.66)	47.5 (2.51)	6.4 (1.14)	7.1 (1.36)
Geographic region: ³					
Northeast	100.0	45.4 (1.03)	39.3 (1.04)	9.2 (0.60)	6.0 (0.49)
Midwest	100.0	38.7 (1.10)	42.2 (1.01)	10.8 (0.58)	8.3 (0.48)
South	100.0	39.3 (0.85)	40.8 (0.80)	10.9 (0.52)	9.1 (0.52)
West	100.0	50.8 (1.10)	35.4 (1.10)	7.7 (0.70)	6.1 (0.54)
Place of residence: ³					
MSA, central city ⁶	100.0	48.9 (0.94)	36.5 (0.88)	7.9 (0.53)	6.6 (0.42)
MSA, not central city ⁶	100.0	41.8 (0.80)	40.9 (0.76)	10.4 (0.50)	6.9 (0.35)
Not MSA ⁶	100.0	34.3 (0.97)	42.4 (0.88)	12.2 (0.58)	11.1 (0.70)

See footnotes at end of table.

Table 3. Percent distribution of usual number of cigarettes smoked in a day among current smokers aged 18 years and over, by selected characteristics: United States, average annual, 1997–98—Con.

Selected characteristic	Usual number of cigarettes smoked in a day ¹				
	Total	Less than 15	15–24	25–34	35 or more
Men					
Percent distribution (standard error)					
Ages 18 years and over (age-adjusted) ^{2,3}	100.0	36.3 (0.70)	41.1 (0.68)	12.0 (0.45)	10.6 (0.44)
Ages 18 years and over (crude) ²	100.0	36.9 (0.67)	40.7 (0.63)	12.3 (0.43)	10.2 (0.39)
Age:					
18–24 years	100.0	51.3 (2.11)	37.1 (2.00)	8.4 (1.22)	3.2 (0.64)
25–44 years	100.0	37.2 (0.90)	41.8 (0.88)	12.3 (0.62)	8.7 (0.49)
45–64 years	100.0	29.0 (1.06)	40.7 (1.20)	14.3 (0.82)	15.9 (0.90)
65–74 years	100.0	33.2 (2.63)	38.9 (2.36)	14.5 (2.11)	13.4 (1.72)
75 years and over	100.0	37.7 (3.98)	48.1 (4.18)	*4.6 (1.67)	9.7 (2.83)
Race/ethnicity: ³					
Hispanic	100.0	67.0 (1.75)	26.6 (1.64)	3.5 (0.58)	2.9 (0.74)
White non-Hispanic	100.0	28.1 (0.77)	44.5 (0.79)	14.5 (0.54)	13.0 (0.54)
Black non-Hispanic	100.0	59.8 (1.75)	32.5 (1.75)	4.7 (0.81)	3.0 (0.56)
Asian/Pacific Islander non-Hispanic	100.0	64.8 (5.79)	34.2 (5.78)	*1.0 (0.70)	*—
Education: ³					
Less than high school graduate	100.0	34.8 (1.19)	39.8 (1.19)	12.0 (0.81)	13.4 (0.97)
GED diploma ⁴	100.0	25.5 (2.80)	45.7 (3.03)	15.1 (2.19)	13.7 (2.04)
High school graduate	100.0	33.3 (1.30)	44.0 (1.38)	12.7 (0.84)	9.9 (0.74)
Some college - no degree	100.0	36.5 (1.68)	41.8 (1.79)	12.0 (0.94)	9.7 (1.39)
Associate of arts degree	100.0	39.9 (3.22)	37.9 (3.04)	9.9 (1.60)	12.2 (1.66)
Bachelor of arts, science degree	100.0	47.6 (2.45)	37.0 (2.63)	8.6 (1.17)	6.8 (1.65)
Masters, doctorate, medical degree	100.0	57.2 (3.06)	31.1 (2.92)	6.3 (1.57)	5.3 (1.22)
Poverty status: ^{3,5}					
Below poverty level	100.0	41.8 (1.79)	34.6 (1.65)	10.8 (1.06)	12.8 (1.46)
Poverty - 1.99 times poverty level	100.0	36.8 (1.44)	41.8 (1.46)	10.7 (0.92)	10.7 (0.99)
2.00–3.99 times poverty level	100.0	34.1 (1.23)	40.8 (1.20)	13.1 (0.87)	12.1 (0.96)
4.00 times poverty level or more	100.0	37.3 (1.82)	42.8 (1.83)	11.3 (0.81)	8.6 (0.68)
Marital status: ³					
Never married	100.0	40.3 (1.76)	40.4 (2.06)	11.1 (1.64)	8.1 (0.96)
Married	100.0	35.3 (0.99)	41.2 (0.97)	12.0 (0.67)	11.5 (0.66)
Cohabiting	100.0	32.3 (2.13)	44.2 (3.72)	12.4 (1.42)	11.1 (3.09)
Divorced or separated	100.0	32.4 (2.11)	41.5 (1.94)	12.0 (1.46)	14.1 (1.67)
Widowed	100.0	33.5 (6.75)	45.6 (5.68)	*10.8 (3.33)	10.1 (2.57)
Geographic region: ³					
Northeast	100.0	39.3 (1.62)	39.8 (1.46)	11.3 (0.93)	9.5 (1.06)
Midwest	100.0	31.2 (1.46)	44.1 (1.52)	13.1 (0.93)	11.6 (0.82)
South	100.0	34.6 (1.10)	41.1 (1.05)	12.9 (0.76)	11.5 (0.72)
West	100.0	45.2 (1.52)	37.8 (1.53)	8.7 (0.91)	8.2 (0.96)
Place of residence: ³					
MSA, central city ⁶	100.0	44.0 (1.31)	37.6 (1.28)	9.1 (0.69)	9.3 (0.76)
MSA, not central city ⁶	100.0	35.3 (1.10)	43.0 (1.10)	12.6 (0.74)	9.2 (0.57)
Not MSA ⁶	100.0	28.6 (1.28)	41.8 (1.26)	14.6 (0.84)	15.1 (1.01)

See footnotes at end of table.

Table 3. Percent distribution of usual number of cigarettes smoked in a day among current smokers aged 18 years and over, by selected characteristics: United States, average annual, 1997–98—Con.

Selected characteristic	Usual number of cigarettes smoked in a day ¹				
	Total	Less than 15	15–24	25–34	35 or more
Women					
Percent distribution (standard error)					
Ages 18 years and over (age-adjusted) ^{2,3}	100.0	48.2 (0.69)	38.9 (0.69)	8.0 (0.37)	4.9 (0.28)
Ages 18 years and over (crude) ²	100.0	48.0 (0.67)	39.1 (0.66)	7.9 (0.36)	5.0 (0.29)
Age:					
18–24 years	100.0	60.2 (2.01)	33.8 (1.98)	4.6 (0.79)	*1.4 (0.44)
25–44 years	100.0	48.7 (0.96)	39.3 (0.95)	7.2 (0.53)	4.8 (0.40)
45–64 years	100.0	38.9 (1.13)	42.9 (1.15)	10.9 (0.74)	7.2 (0.61)
65–74 years	100.0	50.9 (2.35)	35.7 (2.26)	7.8 (1.32)	5.6 (1.11)
75 years and over	100.0	58.6 (3.67)	34.2 (3.56)	6.0 (1.55)	*1.2 (0.59)
Race/ethnicity: ³					
Hispanic	100.0	74.0 (2.13)	23.0 (2.11)	1.8 (0.48)	*1.1 (0.37)
White non-Hispanic	100.0	42.5 (0.77)	42.6 (0.78)	9.4 (0.46)	5.5 (0.34)
Black non-Hispanic	100.0	72.0 (1.45)	23.5 (1.37)	2.4 (0.54)	2.0 (0.53)
Asian-Pacific Islander non-Hispanic	100.0	68.1 (4.94)	23.3 (4.77)	*2.7 (1.86)	*5.8 (1.84)
Education: ³					
Less than high school graduate	100.0	44.6 (1.37)	38.9 (1.32)	9.2 (0.72)	7.2 (0.65)
GED diploma ⁴	100.0	37.7 (4.44)	43.3 (3.33)	12.8 (3.34)	6.3 (1.30)
High school graduate	100.0	46.3 (1.02)	40.7 (1.08)	8.5 (0.65)	4.5 (0.45)
Some college - no degree	100.0	49.3 (1.62)	38.3 (1.58)	8.0 (0.87)	4.5 (0.68)
Associate of arts degree	100.0	56.2 (2.18)	34.5 (2.11)	6.1 (0.92)	3.2 (0.69)
Bachelor of arts, science degree	100.0	58.1 (2.49)	32.8 (2.44)	6.3 (1.23)	*2.8 (0.85)
Masters, doctorate, medical degree	100.0	53.5 (3.29)	42.2 (3.19)	*2.4 (0.82)	*1.9 (0.93)
Poverty status: ^{3,5}					
Below poverty level	100.0	49.0 (1.63)	37.4 (1.41)	8.2 (0.74)	5.5 (0.68)
Poverty - 1.99 times poverty level	100.0	45.2 (1.55)	40.5 (1.48)	7.9 (0.82)	6.4 (0.75)
2.00–3.99 times poverty level	100.0	46.7 (1.28)	38.6 (1.24)	9.6 (0.83)	5.2 (0.53)
4.00 times poverty level or more	100.0	54.9 (1.76)	35.2 (1.70)	6.8 (0.74)	3.0 (0.54)
Marital status: ³					
Never married	100.0	53.8 (2.23)	36.5 (2.20)	7.0 (1.42)	2.7 (0.67)
Married	100.0	46.8 (1.21)	39.7 (1.14)	8.5 (0.56)	5.0 (0.44)
Cohabiting	100.0	51.3 (3.03)	37.5 (2.69)	7.7 (2.19)	3.6 (0.84)
Divorced or separated	100.0	41.1 (1.40)	44.5 (1.52)	8.4 (0.82)	6.0 (0.66)
Widowed	100.0	40.6 (2.75)	47.9 (2.73)	5.1 (1.07)	6.4 (1.60)
Geographic region: ³					
Northeast	100.0	50.7 (1.69)	39.2 (1.75)	7.1 (0.82)	2.9 (0.41)
Midwest	100.0	46.2 (1.28)	40.7 (1.26)	8.4 (0.69)	4.8 (0.49)
South	100.0	44.6 (1.17)	40.3 (1.08)	8.7 (0.64)	6.4 (0.58)
West	100.0	56.9 (1.39)	33.0 (1.46)	6.2 (0.81)	4.0 (0.56)
Place of residence: ³					
MSA, central city ⁶	100.0	54.0 (1.18)	35.5 (1.09)	6.4 (0.63)	4.1 (0.43)
MSA, not central city ⁶	100.0	48.1 (1.02)	39.3 (1.05)	8.1 (0.54)	4.4 (0.39)
Not MSA ⁶	100.0	40.7 (1.40)	43.1 (1.31)	9.5 (0.85)	6.7 (0.74)

* Figure does not meet standards of reliability or precision (see Technical Notes).

– Quantity zero.

¹Usual number of cigarettes smoked in a day includes the usual cigarette consumption of daily and nondaily smokers combined. Estimates for nondaily smokers reflect number of cigarettes smoked only on the days that they smoked and are limited to those who smoked at least once in the past 30 days.

²Persons of other races and unknown race and ethnicity, unknown education, unknown poverty status, and unknown marital status are included in the total, but not shown separately.

³Age adjusted to the 2000 projected U.S. population using age groups 18–24 years, 25–44 years, 45–64 years, 65–74 years, and 75 years and over.

⁴GED is General Educational Development (GED) high school equivalency diploma.

⁵Poverty status is based on family income and family size using the U.S. Census Bureau poverty thresholds for 1996 and 1997.

⁶MSA is metropolitan statistical area (see Technical Notes).

NOTE: Denominator for each percent distribution excludes smokers with unknown number of cigarettes smoked. Estimates reflect usual cigarette consumption on days smoked and do not reflect average cigarette consumption over a period of time such as a week or a month.

Table 4. Percent distribution of age of smoking initiation among current smokers aged 18 years and over: United States, average annual, 1997–98

Selected characteristic	Total	Age first smoked fairly regularly			
		Less than 16 years	16–17 years	18–20 years	21 years and over
Both sexes		Percent distribution (standard error)			
Ages 18 years and over (age-adjusted) ^{1,2}	100.0	29.6 (0.45)	24.4 (0.43)	26.8 (0.42)	19.2 (0.43)
Ages 18 years and over (crude) ¹	100.0	30.3 (0.46)	25.3 (0.42)	27.0 (0.42)	17.4 (0.38)
Age:					
18–24 years	100.0	37.6 (1.35)	34.4 (1.40)	24.0 (1.21)	4.0 (0.53)
25–44 years	100.0	30.4 (0.62)	26.0 (0.57)	26.9 (0.59)	16.7 (0.53)
45–64 years	100.0	27.5 (0.78)	20.6 (0.70)	29.2 (0.76)	22.7 (0.70)
65–74 years	100.0	26.3 (1.54)	22.1 (1.35)	24.7 (1.48)	26.9 (1.50)
75 years and over	100.0	23.8 (2.42)	17.6 (2.11)	24.1 (2.35)	34.6 (2.95)
Race/ethnicity: ²					
Hispanic	100.0	31.8 (1.52)	19.7 (1.20)	27.6 (1.39)	20.8 (1.24)
White non-Hispanic	100.0	30.3 (0.53)	25.5 (0.50)	26.2 (0.48)	17.9 (0.49)
Black non-Hispanic	100.0	25.2 (1.26)	21.5 (1.25)	28.8 (1.15)	24.5 (1.18)
Asian/Pacific Islander non-Hispanic	100.0	16.1 (2.96)	18.6 (2.81)	36.1 (3.58)	29.3 (3.20)
Education: ²					
Less than high school graduate	100.0	41.4 (0.95)	25.4 (0.90)	19.4 (0.76)	13.8 (0.62)
GED diploma ³	100.0	44.8 (2.85)	27.0 (1.84)	17.9 (2.85)	10.3 (1.92)
High school graduate	100.0	25.3 (0.69)	26.3 (0.75)	28.0 (0.78)	20.4 (0.71)
Some college - no degree	100.0	25.3 (0.97)	22.9 (0.96)	29.7 (1.04)	22.2 (1.10)
Associate of arts degree	100.0	25.0 (1.60)	20.3 (1.28)	32.2 (1.62)	22.5 (1.65)
Bachelor of arts, science degree	100.0	16.8 (1.38)	20.9 (1.45)	35.1 (1.86)	27.2 (1.74)
Masters, doctorate, medical degree	100.0	14.7 (1.75)	18.3 (2.17)	39.7 (3.36)	27.3 (3.17)
Poverty status: ^{2,4}					
Below poverty level	100.0	39.0 (1.23)	20.9 (0.99)	21.6 (0.93)	18.6 (0.94)
Poverty - 1.99 times poverty level	100.0	31.3 (0.96)	25.0 (0.91)	24.8 (0.92)	18.9 (0.87)
2.00–3.99 times poverty level	100.0	29.8 (0.89)	24.1 (0.85)	27.1 (0.85)	19.0 (0.79)
4.00 times poverty level or more	100.0	22.8 (1.03)	25.4 (1.12)	30.2 (1.14)	21.6 (1.19)
Marital status: ²					
Never married	100.0	28.9 (1.53)	24.1 (1.26)	26.8 (1.17)	20.1 (1.27)
Married	100.0	29.9 (0.74)	25.3 (0.69)	26.9 (0.69)	17.9 (0.67)
Cohabiting	100.0	34.5 (3.00)	25.9 (1.67)	25.9 (2.95)	13.7 (1.72)
Divorced or separated	100.0	32.3 (1.22)	21.4 (1.08)	25.7 (1.14)	20.7 (0.90)
Widowed	100.0	29.0 (3.99)	30.7 (3.84)	22.5 (2.07)	17.8 (1.95)
Geographic region: ²					
Northeast	100.0	30.5 (1.09)	25.6 (0.94)	27.1 (0.98)	16.9 (0.82)
Midwest	100.0	27.0 (0.76)	26.1 (1.00)	27.9 (0.90)	19.1 (0.95)
South	100.0	30.9 (0.80)	24.0 (0.60)	26.2 (0.65)	18.9 (0.67)
West	100.0	29.7 (0.91)	21.4 (0.98)	26.4 (0.93)	22.5 (1.04)
Place of residence: ²					
MSA, central city ⁵	100.0	29.3 (0.79)	24.1 (0.78)	26.3 (0.75)	20.2 (0.68)
MSA, not central city ⁵	100.0	28.5 (0.67)	24.7 (0.66)	27.1 (0.68)	19.7 (0.64)
Not MSA ⁵	100.0	32.0 (0.95)	24.4 (0.73)	26.6 (0.81)	17.0 (0.86)

See footnotes at end of table.

Table 4. Percent distribution of age of smoking initiation among current smokers aged 18 years and over: United States, average annual, 1997–98—Con.

Selected characteristic	Total	Age first smoked fairly regularly			
		Less than 16 years	16–17 years	18–20 years	21 years and over
Men		Percent distribution (standard error)			
Ages 18 years and over (age-adjusted) ^{1,2}	100.0	33.8 (0.70)	25.2 (0.62)	25.8 (0.61)	15.3 (0.54)
Ages 18 years and over (crude) ¹	100.0	33.1 (0.62)	25.8 (0.60)	26.3 (0.60)	14.8 (0.48)
Age:					
18–24 years	100.0	34.2 (1.80)	34.4 (2.06)	26.2 (1.78)	5.2 (0.81)
25–44 years	100.0	31.3 (0.89)	25.9 (0.80)	26.8 (0.82)	16.0 (0.70)
45–64 years	100.0	34.2 (1.08)	21.4 (0.99)	26.5 (1.01)	18.0 (0.87)
65–74 years	100.0	40.1 (2.48)	25.0 (2.15)	21.3 (2.12)	13.7 (1.62)
75 years and over	100.0	37.0 (4.45)	21.2 (3.58)	22.5 (3.67)	19.3 (3.54)
Race/ethnicity: ²					
Hispanic	100.0	33.3 (1.94)	20.5 (1.51)	30.3 (1.82)	16.0 (1.29)
White non-Hispanic	100.0	35.0 (0.86)	26.5 (0.73)	24.7 (0.71)	13.9 (0.63)
Black non-Hispanic	100.0	28.7 (1.68)	22.2 (1.90)	27.8 (1.68)	21.3 (1.43)
Asian/Pacific Islander non-Hispanic	100.0	17.1 (4.93)	17.2 (3.38)	40.3 (5.42)	25.4 (3.68)
Education: ²					
Less than high school graduate	100.0	45.4 (1.27)	25.7 (1.24)	18.8 (1.00)	10.1 (0.73)
GED diploma ³	100.0	45.5 (3.79)	29.7 (2.54)	20.1 (4.06)	4.7 (1.05)
High school graduate	100.0	29.6 (1.09)	27.9 (1.16)	27.8 (1.20)	14.8 (0.98)
Some college - no degree	100.0	29.1 (1.68)	22.8 (1.40)	29.4 (1.60)	18.8 (1.68)
Associate of arts degree	100.0	32.2 (2.59)	21.0 (2.20)	28.5 (2.43)	18.2 (2.25)
Bachelor of arts, science degree	100.0	14.2 (1.56)	20.6 (2.08)	35.4 (2.80)	29.8 (2.58)
Masters, doctorate, medical degree	100.0	14.4 (2.05)	16.8 (2.99)	38.5 (4.81)	30.2 (4.88)
Poverty status: ^{2,4}					
Below poverty level	100.0	46.1 (1.83)	21.2 (1.68)	19.7 (1.40)	13.0 (1.11)
Poverty - 1.99 times poverty level	100.0	35.2 (1.42)	26.4 (1.21)	24.1 (1.33)	14.3 (1.07)
2.00–3.99 times poverty level	100.0	34.0 (1.33)	25.5 (1.20)	25.7 (1.15)	14.8 (1.03)
4.00 times poverty level or more	100.0	27.0 (1.50)	24.3 (1.39)	30.0 (1.56)	18.6 (1.39)
Marital status: ²					
Never married	100.0	31.4 (1.90)	27.3 (2.00)	24.4 (1.48)	16.8 (1.39)
Married	100.0	33.3 (1.03)	26.1 (0.99)	25.8 (0.95)	14.9 (0.74)
Cohabiting	100.0	37.2 (3.79)	24.6 (2.03)	26.8 (3.39)	11.4 (1.27)
Divorced or separated	100.0	36.4 (2.12)	24.3 (1.86)	24.0 (1.62)	15.4 (1.49)
Widowed	100.0	37.3 (6.53)	29.1 (4.32)	18.3 (3.87)	*15.3 (5.34)
Geographic region: ²					
Northeast	100.0	34.6 (1.47)	27.1 (1.24)	26.0 (1.38)	12.3 (0.81)
Midwest	100.0	31.1 (1.23)	27.4 (1.44)	26.0 (1.24)	15.5 (1.15)
South	100.0	35.8 (1.26)	24.3 (0.94)	25.4 (1.00)	14.5 (0.90)
West	100.0	31.4 (1.45)	22.5 (1.40)	25.9 (1.34)	20.1 (1.39)
Place of residence: ²					
MSA, central city ⁵	100.0	32.9 (1.19)	24.7 (1.08)	25.9 (1.10)	16.5 (0.95)
MSA, not central city ⁵	100.0	33.2 (1.05)	25.2 (0.97)	26.3 (0.96)	15.4 (0.83)
Not MSA ⁵	100.0	36.3 (1.38)	25.9 (1.19)	24.4 (1.14)	13.4 (1.02)

See footnotes at end of table.

Table 4. Percent distribution of age of smoking initiation among current smokers aged 18 years and over: United States, average annual, 1997–98—Con.

Selected characteristic	Total	Age first smoked fairly regularly			
		Less than 16 years	16–17 years	18–20 years	21 years and over
Women		Percent distribution (standard error)			
Ages 18 years and over (age-adjusted) ^{1,2}	100.0	25.7 (0.59)	23.8 (0.56)	27.8 (0.62)	22.7 (0.60)
Ages 18 years and over (crude) ¹	100.0	27.1 (0.62)	24.8 (0.55)	27.7 (0.59)	20.4 (0.54)
Age:					
18–24 years	100.0	41.8 (2.00)	34.4 (1.98)	21.2 (1.63)	2.6 (0.50)
25–44 years	100.0	29.5 (0.86)	26.1 (0.84)	27.0 (0.87)	17.4 (0.71)
45–64 years	100.0	19.7 (1.03)	19.7 (1.00)	32.5 (1.14)	28.2 (1.05)
65–74 years	100.0	15.6 (1.72)	19.8 (1.80)	27.3 (2.02)	37.2 (2.27)
75 years and over	100.0	15.0 (2.76)	15.1 (2.68)	25.2 (3.10)	44.7 (3.73)
Race/ethnicity: ²					
Hispanic	100.0	29.6 (2.30)	18.1 (1.78)	24.1 (1.98)	28.2 (2.19)
White non-Hispanic	100.0	26.2 (0.66)	24.8 (0.65)	27.7 (0.69)	21.3 (0.67)
Black non-Hispanic	100.0	21.4 (1.49)	20.8 (1.41)	29.4 (1.76)	28.3 (1.72)
Asian/Pacific Islander non-Hispanic	100.0	18.5 (4.22)	20.2 (4.54)	30.3 (5.83)	31.1 (4.78)
Education: ²					
Less than high school graduate	100.0	37.4 (1.22)	24.9 (1.14)	20.0 (1.06)	17.7 (1.01)
GED diploma ³	100.0	41.2 (3.85)	24.2 (2.94)	15.0 (2.47)	19.6 (3.85)
High school graduate	100.0	21.9 (0.92)	25.4 (1.00)	28.3 (1.08)	24.5 (1.00)
Some college - no degree	100.0	21.7 (1.15)	23.2 (1.30)	29.9 (1.38)	25.2 (1.42)
Associate of arts degree	100.0	19.5 (1.94)	19.9 (1.60)	35.5 (2.31)	25.1 (2.28)
Bachelor of arts, science degree	100.0	17.8 (1.89)	20.5 (1.99)	35.6 (2.27)	26.1 (2.23)
Masters, doctorate, medical degree	100.0	13.2 (2.35)	17.8 (2.93)	44.2 (3.41)	24.8 (3.09)
Poverty status: ^{2,4}					
Below poverty level	100.0	33.4 (1.51)	21.1 (1.16)	23.2 (1.20)	22.3 (1.33)
Poverty - 1.99 times poverty level	100.0	27.7 (1.25)	23.7 (1.26)	25.5 (1.28)	23.1 (1.23)
2.00–3.99 times poverty level	100.0	25.6 (1.21)	22.6 (1.06)	28.3 (1.16)	23.5 (1.14)
4.00 times poverty level or more	100.0	17.5 (1.23)	26.9 (1.57)	30.6 (1.64)	25.0 (1.66)
Marital status: ²					
Never married	100.0	25.2 (2.19)	20.4 (1.33)	29.8 (2.04)	24.5 (2.04)
Married	100.0	24.9 (1.00)	24.4 (1.01)	28.6 (1.09)	22.0 (1.09)
Cohabiting	100.0	27.7 (2.49)	28.1 (2.86)	20.6 (2.34)	23.6 (2.82)
Divorced or separated	100.0	28.9 (1.53)	19.6 (1.19)	26.8 (1.51)	24.7 (1.24)
Widowed	100.0	36.3 (2.64)	21.8 (2.58)	23.7 (2.42)	18.2 (1.77)
Geographic region: ²					
Northeast	100.0	27.6 (1.40)	24.5 (1.20)	27.7 (1.43)	20.2 (1.16)
Midwest	100.0	22.6 (0.96)	25.3 (1.22)	29.6 (1.40)	22.5 (1.31)
South	100.0	25.7 (1.09)	23.8 (0.83)	27.0 (0.88)	23.6 (0.90)
West	100.0	28.7 (1.44)	19.9 (1.26)	27.0 (1.41)	24.4 (1.56)
Place of residence: ²					
MSA, central city ⁵	100.0	26.1 (1.02)	23.6 (0.95)	26.6 (1.04)	23.7 (1.04)
MSA, not central city ⁵	100.0	24.7 (0.85)	24.6 (0.85)	27.9 (0.98)	22.8 (0.87)
Not MSA ⁵	100.0	27.5 (1.35)	22.6 (1.06)	28.9 (1.20)	21.0 (1.23)

* Figure does not meet standards of reliability or precision (see Technical Notes).

¹Persons of other races and unknown race and ethnicity, unknown education, unknown poverty status, and unknown marital status are included in the total, but not shown separately.

²Age adjusted to the 2000 projected U.S. population using age groups 18–24 years, 25–44 years, 45–64 years, 65–74 years, and 75 years and over.

³GED is General Educational Development high school equivalency diploma.

⁴Poverty status is based on family income and family size using the U.S. Census Bureau poverty thresholds for 1996 and 1997.

⁵MSA is metropolitan statistical area (see Technical Notes).

NOTE: Denominator for each percent distribution excludes current smokers with unknown age of smoking initiation.

Table 5. Percent of current smokers aged 18 years and over who tried to quit smoking in the past year, by current smoking status and selected characteristics: United States, average annual, 1997–98

Selected characteristic	All smokers	Nondaily smokers	Daily smokers
Both sexes		Percent (standard error)	
Ages 18 years and over (age-adjusted) ^{1,2}	41.6 (0.48)	54.9 (1.09)	39.0 (0.51)
Ages 18 years and over (crude) ¹	42.6 (0.49)	54.8 (1.02)	40.0 (0.52)
Age:			
18–24 years	50.9 (1.47)	53.9 (2.67)	50.1 (1.75)
25–44 years	43.5 (0.72)	54.6 (1.44)	40.9 (0.76)
45–64 years	38.4 (0.74)	54.0 (2.14)	35.8 (0.76)
65–74 years	37.7 (1.61)	65.7 (3.56)	32.6 (1.78)
75 years and over	33.7 (2.62)	49.8 (6.61)	30.9 (3.03)
Race/ethnicity: ²			
Hispanic	41.9 (1.30)	49.5 (2.77)	39.0 (1.59)
White non-Hispanic	40.9 (0.55)	55.7 (1.33)	38.4 (0.59)
Black non-Hispanic	44.7 (1.48)	56.1 (2.66)	41.2 (1.50)
Asian/Pacific Islander non-Hispanic	46.1 (3.30)	56.2 (7.90)	45.0 (3.61)
Education: ²			
Less than high school graduate	40.2 (0.91)	58.7 (2.32)	37.0 (0.97)
GED diploma ³	35.2 (1.97)	65.5 (5.89)	32.6 (1.91)
High school graduate	40.3 (0.83)	57.1 (2.03)	37.5 (0.95)
Some college - no degree	43.4 (1.11)	51.6 (2.52)	41.6 (1.20)
Associate of arts degree	45.3 (1.68)	60.6 (3.58)	42.9 (1.86)
Bachelor of arts, science degree	42.6 (1.64)	47.8 (3.22)	42.3 (1.88)
Masters, doctorate, medical degree	44.7 (4.03)	46.7 (5.38)	49.3 (2.96)
Poverty status: ^{2,4}			
Below poverty level	43.2 (1.18)	63.2 (2.76)	39.4 (1.29)
Poverty - 1.99 times poverty level	42.7 (1.05)	58.9 (2.92)	40.1 (1.12)
2.00–3.99 times poverty level	42.1 (0.89)	54.7 (2.14)	39.9 (0.94)
4.00 times poverty level or more	44.1 (1.33)	54.2 (2.63)	41.9 (1.50)
Marital status: ²			
Never married	38.0 (1.39)	53.7 (2.68)	34.2 (1.44)
Married	42.0 (0.74)	54.5 (1.99)	39.7 (0.79)
Cohabiting	39.4 (1.86)	56.1 (5.26)	37.4 (2.07)
Divorced or separated	43.7 (1.29)	58.9 (3.26)	40.8 (1.36)
Widowed	53.1 (2.44)	71.8 (6.04)	49.0 (2.81)
Geographic region: ²			
Northeast	46.2 (1.15)	60.6 (2.73)	43.2 (1.22)
Midwest	41.3 (0.93)	55.8 (2.08)	38.5 (0.98)
South	39.3 (0.79)	54.1 (1.89)	36.5 (0.85)
West	41.8 (1.05)	50.6 (2.18)	39.9 (1.13)
Place of residence: ²			
MSA, central city ⁵	41.3 (0.80)	49.5 (1.75)	39.5 (0.88)
MSA, not central city ⁵	42.2 (0.77)	56.8 (1.68)	39.3 (0.83)
Not MSA ⁵	41.0 (1.06)	60.1 (2.49)	37.9 (1.06)

See footnotes at end of table.

Table 5. Percent of current smokers aged 18 years and over who tried to quit smoking in the past year, by current smoking status and selected characteristics: United States, average annual, 1997–98—Con.

Selected characteristic	All smokers	Nondaily smokers	Daily smokers
Men		Percent (standard error)	
Ages 18 years and over (age-adjusted) ^{1,2}	41.0 (0.71)	53.9 (1.67)	38.7 (0.76)
Ages 18 years and over (crude) ¹	42.2 (0.70)	52.4 (1.41)	39.9 (0.76)
Age:			
18–24 years	50.0 (2.10)	50.0 (3.71)	50.1 (2.50)
25–44 years	43.2 (0.93)	51.5 (1.90)	41.1 (1.00)
45–64 years	37.9 (1.10)	55.1 (3.08)	35.2 (1.14)
65–74 years	34.9 (2.32)	61.3 (6.66)	30.8 (2.39)
75 years and over	33.7 (4.33)	59.5 (10.55)	30.1 (4.61)
Race/ethnicity: ²			
Hispanic	41.0 (1.69)	49.6 (3.43)	37.4 (1.88)
White non-Hispanic	40.1 (0.82)	54.1 (2.10)	38.1 (0.87)
Black non-Hispanic	44.9 (1.98)	54.7 (3.58)	41.6 (2.01)
Asian/Pacific Islander non-Hispanic	51.8 (5.29)	59.8 (8.18)	50.7 (5.80)
Education: ²			
Less than high school graduate	39.0 (1.26)	55.7 (3.07)	36.2 (1.34)
GED diploma ³	34.8 (2.55)	56.5 (6.67)	33.3 (2.51)
High school graduate	39.4 (1.21)	53.9 (3.07)	37.0 (1.35)
Some college - no degree	42.8 (1.80)	52.2 (3.05)	40.3 (1.96)
Associate of arts degree	43.8 (2.20)	63.0 (4.84)	42.0 (2.44)
Bachelor of arts, science degree	42.0 (2.68)	40.4 (3.91)	43.9 (3.08)
Masters, doctorate, medical degree	43.7 (4.25)	42.0 (6.94)	47.9 (4.78)
Poverty status: ^{2,4}			
Below poverty level	41.3 (1.96)	59.6 (3.96)	36.9 (2.28)
Poverty - 1.99 times poverty level	43.0 (1.60)	54.4 (4.01)	41.5 (1.75)
2.00–3.99 times poverty level	41.8 (1.23)	53.0 (3.19)	40.3 (1.33)
4.00 times poverty level or more	44.1 (1.76)	55.0 (3.76)	41.5 (1.92)
Marital status: ²			
Never married	35.0 (1.83)	49.7 (3.37)	30.7 (1.50)
Married	42.6 (1.05)	56.5 (2.62)	40.3 (1.14)
Cohabiting	39.4 (2.53)	56.9 (6.18)	37.3 (2.79)
Divorced or separated	43.1 (2.13)	59.4 (5.37)	40.2 (2.28)
Widowed	49.0 (6.53)	76.7 (8.07)	41.8 (8.01)
Geographic region: ²			
Northeast	46.6 (1.53)	59.6 (3.26)	43.8 (1.72)
Midwest	39.7 (1.53)	47.3 (3.52)	38.7 (1.61)
South	39.0 (1.22)	54.0 (2.63)	36.1 (1.26)
West	41.3 (1.56)	53.0 (3.48)	38.7 (1.75)
Place of residence: ²			
MSA, central city ⁵	40.9 (1.15)	49.6 (2.77)	39.2 (1.26)
MSA, not central city ⁵	41.6 (1.10)	54.4 (3.15)	39.3 (1.17)
Not MSA ⁵	39.7 (1.49)	58.8 (3.25)	36.9 (1.58)

See footnotes at end of table.

Table 5. Percent of current smokers aged 18 years and over who tried to quit smoking in the past year, by current smoking status and selected characteristics: United States, average annual, 1997–98—Con.

Selected characteristic	All smokers	Nondaily smokers	Daily smokers
Women			
Percent (standard error)			
Ages 18 years and over (age-adjusted) ^{1,2}	42.3 (0.68)	56.7 (1.68)	39.3 (0.69)
Ages 18 years and over (crude) ¹	43.1 (0.67)	57.6 (1.60)	40.0 (0.68)
Age:			
18–24 years	52.0 (1.88)	59.3 (4.28)	50.1 (2.18)
25–44 years	43.8 (0.96)	58.5 (2.19)	40.6 (1.02)
45–64 years	39.0 (1.08)	52.9 (2.91)	36.6 (1.15)
65–74 years	39.9 (2.28)	68.4 (4.45)	34.0 (2.50)
75 years and over	33.7 (3.47)	45.2 (8.55)	31.4 (3.90)
Race/ethnicity: ²			
Hispanic	43.6 (2.17)	49.3 (4.08)	41.6 (2.45)
White non-Hispanic	41.8 (0.73)	58.1 (1.85)	38.8 (0.76)
Black non-Hispanic	44.6 (1.99)	58.8 (3.72)	40.7 (2.18)
Asian/Pacific Islander non-Hispanic	38.6 (5.02)	48.5 (9.13)	38.6 (5.04)
Education: ²			
Less than high school graduate	41.6 (1.39)	63.4 (3.75)	37.8 (1.42)
GED diploma ³	36.8 (3.09)	75.1 (6.49)	31.5 (3.10)
High school graduate	41.2 (1.11)	61.1 (2.76)	37.9 (1.21)
Some college - no degree	44.2 (1.55)	49.5 (3.25)	43.1 (1.61)
Associate of arts degree	45.2 (2.33)	58.8 (4.30)	42.6 (2.57)
Bachelor of arts, science degree	43.2 (2.18)	51.2 (4.54)	41.2 (2.49)
Masters, doctorate, medical degree	52.0 (3.43)	58.3 (5.56)	44.9 (3.80)
Poverty status: ^{2,4}			
Below poverty level	44.9 (1.46)	64.5 (3.38)	41.4 (1.56)
Poverty - 1.99 times poverty level	42.3 (1.48)	64.2 (4.00)	38.5 (1.51)
2.00–3.99 times poverty level	42.3 (1.19)	56.9 (2.97)	39.4 (1.26)
4.00 times poverty level or more	43.8 (2.08)	52.5 (3.19)	42.2 (2.35)
Marital status: ²			
Never married	42.4 (2.33)	59.9 (3.66)	38.6 (2.41)
Married	41.3 (1.12)	53.3 (2.90)	38.9 (1.16)
Cohabiting	40.4 (2.58)	55.7 (7.25)	38.6 (2.78)
Divorced or separated	44.0 (1.58)	57.8 (3.61)	41.2 (1.68)
Widowed	54.4 (2.51)	68.7 (7.12)	51.2 (2.90)
Geographic region: ²			
Northeast	45.8 (1.59)	60.1 (3.94)	42.9 (1.54)
Midwest	43.1 (1.32)	62.6 (2.97)	38.6 (1.32)
South	39.6 (1.10)	55.0 (3.11)	36.9 (1.15)
West	42.0 (1.50)	49.1 (3.35)	40.5 (1.62)
Place of residence: ²			
MSA, central city ⁵	41.9 (1.20)	50.2 (2.89)	39.8 (1.24)
MSA, not central city ⁵	42.6 (1.00)	59.4 (2.38)	39.2 (1.07)
Not MSA ⁵	42.5 (1.46)	63.0 (3.71)	39.0 (1.44)

¹Age adjusted to the 2000 projected U.S. population using age groups 18–24 years, 25–44 years, 45–64 years, 65–74 years, and 75 years and over.

²Persons of other races and unknown race and ethnicity, unknown education, unknown poverty status, and unknown marital status are included in the total, but not shown separately.

³GED is General Educational Development high school equivalency diploma.

⁴Poverty status is based on family income and family size using the U.S. Census Bureau poverty thresholds for 1996 and 1997.

⁵MSA is metropolitan statistical area (see Technical Notes).

NOTE: Denominator for each percent excludes current smokers for whom information on attempting to quit smoking is unknown.

Technical Notes

Sample design

The National Health Interview Survey (NHIS) is a cross-sectional household interview survey of the U.S. civilian noninstitutionalized population. Data are collected continuously throughout the year in all 50 States and the District of Columbia. The NHIS uses a multistage, clustered sample design to produce national estimates for a variety of health indicators. Information on basic health topics is collected for all household members, by proxy if necessary. Additional information is collected for one sample adult and one sample child in each family with self-response required for the Sample Adult questionnaire. Interviews are conducted in the home using a computer-assisted personal interview (CAPI) questionnaire. Telephone followup is permitted after a first face-to-face meeting if in-home interviews cannot be done.

Response rates

In 1997, interviews were completed in 39,832 households for 40,623 families with 36,116 adults completing the Sample Adult portion of the interview. The final response rate for the 1997 Sample Adult questionnaire was 80.4% (12). In 1998, interviews were completed in 38,209 households for 38,773 families with 32,440 adults completing the Sample Adult component. The final response rate for the 1998 Sample Adult questionnaire was 73.9% (13). Combining years 1997 and 1998, NHIS interviews were completed in 78,041 households for 79,396 interviewed families and 68,556 interviewed sample adults aged 18 years and over. The final response rate for the 1997–98 combined sample adult files was 77.2%. Procedures used in calculating response rates are described in detail in appendix I of the Survey Description of the NHIS data files (12,13).

Item nonresponse

Item nonresponse for each of the sociodemographic indicators was less

than 1% with the exception of questions related to income. Item nonresponse for detailed income was about 19.5%.

Persons with unknown sociodemographic characteristics are not shown separately in the tables, but are included in the totals and in all other variables for which data were reported.

Item nonresponse was less than 2% for most of the smoking questions, except the question that asked nondaily smokers how many of the past 30 days they smoked cigarettes. For this question, item nonresponse was about 5%. The denominators for statistics shown in tables 1–5 exclude persons with unknown smoking characteristics for a given table.

Age adjustment

Data shown in tables 1–5 and figures 1–4, 6, and 7 were age adjusted using the 2000 U.S. standard population provided by the U.S. Census Bureau (16,17). Age adjustment was used to allow comparison among various population subgroups that have different age structures. This is particularly important for demographic characteristics such as race and ethnicity, education, and marital status. It is also helpful for other characteristics. The following age groups were used for age adjustment: 18–24 years, 25–44 years, 45–64 years, 65–74 years, and 75 years and over (table I).

Estimates were calculated using software for statistical analysis of correlated data (SUDAAN) (15). The SUDAAN procedure PROC DESCRIPT was used to produce age-adjusted percents and their standard errors.

Table I. Age distribution and age-adjustment weights used in age-adjusting data shown in tables 1–5 and figures 1–4, 6, and 7

Age	Standard population in thousands
18 years and over	203,851
18–24 years	26,258
25–44 years	81,892
45–64 years	60,991
65–74 years	18,136
75 years and over.	16,574

Tests of significance

Statistical tests performed to assess significance of differences in the estimates were two-tailed with no adjustments for multiple comparisons. The test statistic used to determine statistical significance of differences between two percents was:

$$z = \frac{|X_a - X_b|}{\sqrt{S_a^2 + S_b^2}}$$

Here X_a and X_b are the two percents being compared, and S_a and S_b are the standard errors of the percents. The critical value used for two-sided tests at the 0.05 level of significance was 1.96.

Relative standard error

The relative standard error (RSE) of an estimate is obtained by dividing the standard error ($SE(x)$) of the estimate by the estimate (x) itself. This quantity is expressed as a percent of the estimate:

$$RSE = 100 \left(\frac{SE(x)}{x} \right)$$

In tables 1–5, estimates having an RSE of more than 30% are indicated with an asterisk and are considered statistically unreliable.

Definition of terms

Sociodemographic terms

Age—Age at last birthday was initially asked of the household respondent for all family members and subsequently verified with the sample adult respondent.

Race/ethnicity—The questions related to race and ethnicity initially were asked of the household respondent and subsequently verified with the sample adult. A flash card listing the response categories was shown to the respondent. Persons reporting any Hispanic ethnicity were classified as “Hispanic” regardless of racial identification. Respondents were asked to report as many racial identifications as they thought applicable, with a followup question asking which race best described them. The “best race” question was used in this report to classify persons according to a limited set of race groups. The categories

“white non-Hispanic” and “black non-Hispanic” are single race categories. The race category “Asian/Pacific Islander non-Hispanic” includes respondent designations of Chinese, Filipino, Hawaiian, Vietnamese, Japanese, Korean, Samoan, Guamanian, Asian Indian, and all other Asian/Pacific Islander groups. Several racial/ethnic groups identified in the NHIS were not shown separately in this report due to small sample sizes and large standard errors associated with most statistics for these groups. These include American Indian, Aleut, Eskimo, multiple races with no main race specified, and other unspecified races. These groups are included in the totals in each table.

Education—This question was asked of the household respondent and not verified with the sample adult. The question asks for the highest level of school attended or highest degree received. Respondents were shown a flash card to choose an appropriate category. Greater detail is available on the data file; categories were combined due to small sample size in some groups.

Poverty status—Poverty status is based on family income and family size using the U.S. Census Bureau’s poverty thresholds (19,20). Each adult’s poverty status is expressed in terms of a ratio of family income to poverty threshold. The lowest income group consists of persons living below the poverty level (ratio less than 1.00). The highest income group consists of persons whose family incomes were at least 4 times the poverty level (ratio of 4.00 or more).

Marital status—Respondents were asked to choose a marital status category and, for the first time beginning in 1997, one of the choices was “living with partner,” which is also termed “cohabiting.” Adults could select the category they felt most appropriate for their marital situation. The major difference in the new NHIS questionnaire is that persons who were “living with partner” were considered members of the same family whereas in the pre-1997 NHIS, they were considered separate families.

Geographic region—To classify the U.S. population by geographic area, the

States are grouped into four regions. These regions, which correspond to those used by the U.S. Census Bureau, are as follows:

<i>Region</i>	<i>States included</i>
Northeast	Maine, Vermont, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Connecticut, Rhode Island, New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania
Midwest	Ohio, Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Iowa, Missouri, North Dakota, South Dakota, Kansas, and Nebraska
South	Delaware, Maryland, District of Columbia, West Virginia, Virginia, Kentucky, Tennessee, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, Oklahoma, Arkansas, and Texas
West	Washington, Oregon, California, Nevada, New Mexico, Arizona, Idaho, Utah, Colorado, Montana, Wyoming, Alaska, and Hawaii

MSA—Metropolitan statistical area (MSA), a term first used in 1983, was defined by the U.S. Office of Management and Budget and is used by the U.S. Census Bureau to classify geographic areas (21). The categories shown in this report are (a) “MSA, central city,” which generally refers to cities with populations of 50,000 or more; (b) “MSA, not central city,” which refers to communities adjacent to the central city of an MSA that have a high degree of economic and social integration with the central city; and (c) “Not MSA,” which refers to more rural areas of the country. The classification of areas in the 1997–98 NHIS is based on data from the 1990 decennial census.

Smoking status terms

Lifetime smoking status—includes both past smoking history and current smoking practice.

Never smokers—Adults who never smoked or who smoked fewer than 100 cigarettes in their lifetimes.

Former smokers—Adults who had smoked at least 100 cigarettes in their lifetimes, but did not currently smoke at the time of interview.

Current smokers—Adults who had smoked 100 cigarettes in their lifetimes and currently smoked cigarettes every day or some days.

Current smoking status—is based on the same criteria as lifetime smoking status, but is displayed somewhat differently. Current smokers are separated into two categories (daily and nondaily) and never smokers and former smokers are combined into a single category (nonsmoker).

Daily smokers—Adults who currently smoked every day.

Nondaily smokers—Adults who currently smoked some days, regardless of the number of days they smoked in the past 30 days.

Nonsmokers—Adults who currently did not smoke cigarettes, including both former smokers and never smokers.

Amount smoked—Adults who smoked daily and those who smoked less than daily were asked separate questions about the usual number of cigarettes smoked in a day. Daily smokers were asked how many cigarettes, on average, they usually smoked a day. Nondaily smokers were asked to report the usual number smoked “on days that they smoked during the past 30 days.” Smokers who said they smoked “some days” (nondaily smokers), but who then said that they had not smoked in the past 30 days, were excluded from the analysis of amount smoked.

Two indicators for the number of cigarettes smoked are shown in this report. One was the mean number of cigarettes smoked on days the respondent smoked. The second was a percent distribution of the usual number of cigarettes smoked in a day on those days that the respondent smoked. This distribution was split into the following

four categories: less than 15 cigarettes, 15–24 cigarettes, 25–34 cigarettes, and 35 cigarettes or more.

Quit attempt—All current smokers were asked if they had stopped smoking for at least one day in the past 12 months because they were trying to quit. Persons who said they had stopped for at least 1 day because they were trying to quit were classified as having attempted to quit. This included persons who said they only smoked some days.

Smoking questions

AHB.010	Have you smoked at least 100 cigarettes in your ENTIRE LIFE?	AHB.030	Do you NOW smoke every day, some days, or not at all? (Asked of adults who had smoked at least 100 cigarettes in lifetime.)	AHB.070	On the average, when you smoked during the PAST 30 DAYS, about how many cigarettes did you smoke a day? (Asked of nondaily smokers who smoked at least one day in the past 30 days.)
AHB.020	How old were you when you FIRST started to smoke fairly regularly? (Asked of adults who had smoked at	AHB.040	How long has it been since you quit smoking cigarettes? (Asked of former smokers.)	AHB.080	During the PAST 12 MONTHS, have you stopped smoking for more than one day BECAUSE YOU WERE TRYING TO QUIT SMOKING? (Asked of all current smokers.)
		AHB.050	On the average, how many cigarettes do you now smoke a day? (Asked of daily smokers)		
		AHB.060	On how many of the past 30 days did you smoke a cigarette?		

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