

# Health Effects of Tobacco Use: Youth and Adults

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According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), preventing tobacco product use among youth is critical to ending the youth tobacco epidemic in the United States.

Tobacco use is the #1 preventable cause of premature death in the United States. Tobacco use is primarily started during adolescence. If cigarette smoking continues at the current rate among youth, 5.6 million of today's youth (under 18) will die early from a smoking related illness. That's about 1 of every 13 Americans aged 17 years or younger who are alive today.



Electronic Cigarettes have gained popularity among youth and young adults, making them the most commonly used product among youth since 2014. In 2022, about 1 in every 30 middle school students and 1 in every 7 high school students reported using electronic cigarettes in the past 30 days.

Many young people use two or more tobacco products and are at a higher risk for developing nicotine dependence and might be more likely to continue using tobacco into adulthood.



Tobacco use, including other tobacco products and e-cigarettes, harms nearly every organ of the body and affects a person's overall health. Cigarettes, other tobacco products, and e-cigarettes include nicotine, an addictive drug that can harm adolescent brain development and impact mood, focus, learning, and impulse control.

E-cigarettes can contain other harmful chemical substances besides nicotine such as:

- Ultrafine particles that can be inhaled deep into the lungs
- Flavorings such as diacetyl, a chemical linked to serious lung disease
- Volatile organic compounds
- Cancer-causing chemicals
- Heavy metals such as nickel, tin, and lead



The liquid used in e-cigarettes has poisoned children and adults by swallowing, breathing or absorbing the liquid through their skin. Nationally, approximately 50% of calls to poison control centers for e-cigarettes are for kids under 5 years of age or younger.

**Smoking** is known to cause multiple cancers including:

Lung	Kidney
Bladder	Acute Myeloid Leukemia
Mouth & Throat	Larynx
Esophagus	Stomach
Pancreas	Cervix

**Smoking** is known to cause multiple lung related illnesses including:

Chronic Bronchitis	Pneumonia
Reduced Lung Function for Smokers	Reduced Lung Function in adults, youth, & infants from Secondhand Smoke
Asthma	Other Respiratory Symptoms
Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease	Emphysema

**Smoking** is known to cause several other health problems, and some that can lead to death:

Periodontal Disease	Adverse Surgical Outcomes
Cataracts	Age-related Macular Degeneration
Heart Attacks	Stroke
Aortic Aneurysm	Peptic Ulcer Disease
Type 2 Diabetes	Rheumatoid Arthritis
Alzheimer's Disease	Reduced Fertility in Men's Sperm
Decreased Immune Function	Negative Impact on Bone Health

Women who smoke also have a higher risk of the following:

Experiencing Reduced Fertility	Giving Birth Prematurely
Facing Sudden Infant Death Syndrome with their Baby	Giving Birth to a Low-Birth-Weight Baby
Experiencing Hip Fractures	Osteoporosis

**Smoking can cause cancer almost anywhere in your body.**

**You can quit.**  
**For free help: 1-800-QUIT-NOW.**

  
CDC.gov/quit

## Nevada Youth Tobacco Statistics

The following data was captured from the 2019-2021 Nevada High School Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) [Comparison Report](#).

<b>Tobacco Use</b>	<b>2021</b>
Percentage of high school students who ever smoked cigarettes (even one or two puffs)	17.5%
Percentage of high school students who smoked cigarettes for the first time before age 13 years (even one or two puffs)	7.9%
Percentage of high school students who thought it would be Fairly/Very Easy to get cigarettes if they wanted some	38.5%
Percentage of high school students who used smokeless tobacco during the 30 days before the survey	2.4%

<b>Electronic Vapor Product Use</b>	<b>2021</b>
Percentage of high school students who ever used electronic vapor products (including e-cigarettes, vapes, vape pens, e-cigars, e-hookahs, hookah pens, and mods)	36.7%
Percentage of high school students who tried electronic vapor products for the first time before age 13 years (including e-cigarettes, vapes, vape pens, e-cigars, e-hookahs, hookah pens, and mods)	10.0%
Percentage of high school students who thought it would be Fairly/Very Easy to get electronic vapor products if they wanted some	47.5%

**Bottom Line – Youth use of tobacco products is unsafe in any form. One way to prevent the significant adverse consequences of tobacco use is to prevent youth from purchasing cigarettes, smokeless tobacco, and other tobacco products.**

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Training Module:  
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Tobacco Control Program  
Division of Public and Behavioral Health

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