

# Cigars, Cigarillos, and Little Cigars

Although cigars contain the same toxins and pose many of the same health risks as cigarettes, they have historically been exempt from many of the regulations placed on cigarettes.<sup>1,2,3</sup> As a result, these products have been manufactured and promoted to maximize their appeal to both youth and adults. Between 2000 and 2017, cigar consumption increased by 116% while cigarette consumption declined by 43% in the U.S.<sup>4</sup>

## Cigars vs. Cigarettes<sup>5, 6</sup>

- **Cigars** are any roll of tobacco wrapped in a tobacco leaf or any substance that contains tobacco. They can vary in size and shape and contain less than 1 gram to 20 grams of tobacco.
- **Cigarettes** are any roll of tobacco wrapped in paper or any substance that does not contain tobacco. They are uniform in size and contain less than 1 gram of tobacco each.

## Types of Cigar Products<sup>3,6</sup>

- **Premium (large) cigars** typically contain 5 to 20 grams of tobacco, can measure over 7 inches in length, and do not have a filter.
- **Cigarillos** contain about 3 grams of tobacco, are slightly bigger than cigarettes or little cigars, and typically do not have a filter.
- **Little cigars/brown cigarettes** contain about 1 gram of tobacco, are similar in size and appearance to cigarettes, are wrapped in brown paper containing some tobacco leaf, and often have a filter.



Premium cigar



Top: tipped cigarillo  
Bottom: cigarillo without tip



Top: cigarette  
Bottom: little cigar

## Flavors and Marketing of Cigars<sup>4</sup>

Although flavored cigarettes other than menthol cigarettes are banned in the United States, tobacco companies still manufacture and sell flavored cigar products, often in menthol, candy, or fruit flavors that appeal to youth. They may also be sold in smaller package sizes than cigarettes, such as single sticks or packs of two, making them cheaper and more easily accessible to youth and other price-sensitive populations. Cigar products are also often sold in brightly colored, youth-appealing packaging, increasing the visibility of these products to children and youth.

## Price of Cigars

The average price of many cigar products, particularly little cigars, is lower than that of cigarettes.<sup>4</sup> Tobacco companies have routinely altered their cigar

## Health Hazards of Cigars:

Cigar smoke contains the same toxic chemicals as cigarettes.<sup>2,3</sup>

Regular cigar smoking increases the risk of:<sup>2,3</sup>

- Lung cancer
- Cancer of the lip, tongue, mouth and throat
- Cancer of the larynx
- Cancer of the esophagus
- Lung diseases such as emphysema and chronic bronchitis
- Coronary heart disease
- Gum disease and tooth loss

Cigars contain nicotine, which is highly addictive.<sup>2</sup>

Secondhand smoke from cigars is a source of indoor air pollution.<sup>2,9</sup>



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products to avoid tax increases and maintain lower cigar prices.<sup>4</sup> These lower prices may make cigars especially appealing to price-sensitive populations, such as youth and low-income adults.

## Cigar, Cigarillo, and Little Cigar Use among Indiana Adults, 2019<sup>7</sup>

- 12.7% of Indiana adults age 18 and older smoked cigars, including cigarillos and little cigars, in 2019.
- Current cigar use was highest among young adults ages 18 to 24 (21.6%).
- 12.9% of adult males smoked cigars compared with 11.2% of adult females.
- Current cigar use was higher among African Americans (30.9%) than whites (10.4%).
- Adults making less than \$20,000 annually and with less than a high school education smoked cigars at twice the rate (18.4% and 29.7%, respectively) of the general population (12.7%).

## Cigar, Cigarillo, and Little Cigar Use among Indiana Youth<sup>8</sup>

- In 2018, 6.6% of middle school students and 18.3% of high school students reported ever smoking cigars, cigarillos, or little cigars in their lifetime.
- Although current use of cigars has declined among Indiana youth since 2000, 2.1% of middle school students and 6.7% of high school students were current cigar smokers in 2018.
- Among Hoosier youth in 2018, use of cigars, cigarillos, or little cigars was slightly higher than cigarette smoking.
- In 2018, nearly half of high school cigar users (46.3%) reported using cigars flavored like mint, candy, alcohol, fruit, chocolate, or other sweets.

## Resources for Quitting

Quitting the use of all tobacco products, including cigars, is one of the best ways to improve health. The Indiana Tobacco Quitline provides free evidence-based advice, support, and resources for quitting, including a program that offers additional support to youth ages 13-17. Tobacco users interested in quitting may contact the Quitline by calling 1-800-QUIT-NOW or visiting [www.QuitNowIndiana.com](http://www.QuitNowIndiana.com).

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<sup>1</sup> National Cancer Institute. Monograph 9: Cigars: Health Effects and Trends. February 1998. Accessed June 1, 2017 from <https://cancercontrol.cancer.gov/brp/tcrb/monographs/>.

<sup>2</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Cigars. December 1, 2016. Accessed June 1, 2017 from [https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/data\\_statistics/fact\\_sheets/tobacco\\_industry/cigars/](https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/data_statistics/fact_sheets/tobacco_industry/cigars/).

<sup>3</sup> Campaign for Tobacco-free Kids. Not your grandfather's cigar: a new generation of cheap and sweet cigars threatens a new generation of kids. 2013. Accessed June 1, 2017 from [https://www.tobaccofreekids.org/content/what\\_we\\_do/industry\\_watch/cigar\\_report/2013CigarReport\\_Full.pdf](https://www.tobaccofreekids.org/content/what_we_do/industry_watch/cigar_report/2013CigarReport_Full.pdf).

<sup>4</sup> Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids. The Rise of Cigars and Cigar Smoking Harms. March 1, 2019. Accessed June 17, 2019 from <https://www.tobaccofreekids.org/research/factsheets/pdf/0333.pdf>.

<sup>5</sup> 26 USC 5702. Accessed June 1, 2017 from [http://uscode.house.gov/view.xhtml?req=\(title:26%20section:5702%20edition:prelim\)](http://uscode.house.gov/view.xhtml?req=(title:26%20section:5702%20edition:prelim)).

<sup>6</sup> National Cancer Institute. Cigar smoking and cancer. October 27, 2010. Accessed June 1, 2017 from <http://www.cancer.gov/cancertopics/factsheet/Tobacco/cigars>.

<sup>7</sup> Indiana Adult Tobacco Survey, 2019.

<sup>8</sup> Indiana Youth Tobacco Survey, 2018.

<sup>9</sup> U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. *The Health Consequences of Involuntary Exposure to Tobacco Smoke: A Report of the Surgeon General*. Rockville, MD: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Coordinating Center for Health Promotion, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Office on Smoking and Health, 2006.

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