

# Cigarette Smoking among African Americans in Indiana



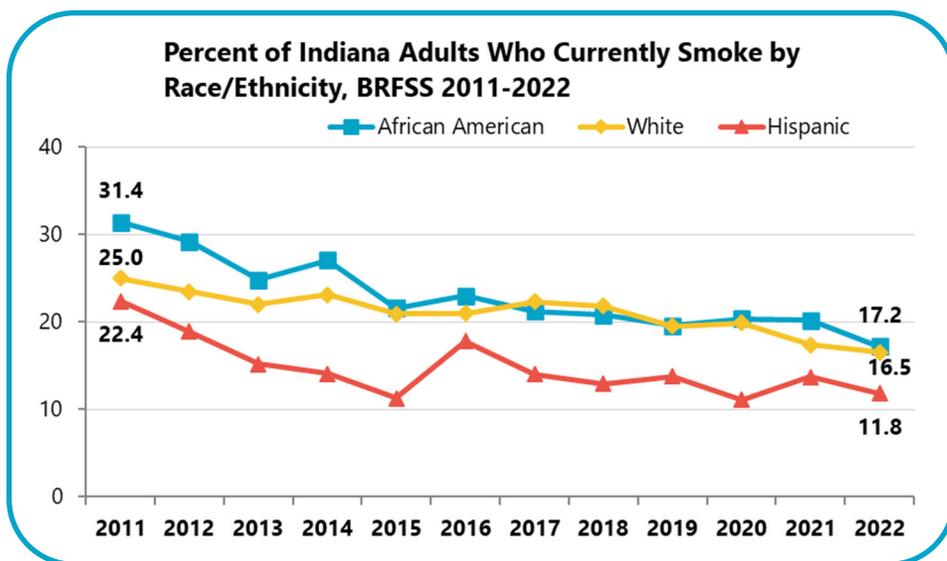
Tobacco Prevention and Cessation

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Everyone deserves a fair and just opportunity to be as healthy as possible, free from the harm that commercial tobacco can cause. While the number of Hoosiers who currently smoke has declined significantly over the last decade, smoking rates have not dropped across all populations equally. Tobacco companies have spent billions targeting African Americans with marketing for menthol cigarettes. African American adults are also less likely to be protected from secondhand smoke exposure than white adults. Because of this environment, adults who are Black or African American smoke at higher rates than white or Hispanic adults, and more African Americans are living with and dying from smoking-related diseases than other racial and ethnic groups.

## Smoking Prevalence among Hoosier African Americans

- In 2022 more than 1 in 6 African American adults in Indiana (17.2%) reported currently smoking cigarettes, a significant decline from 31.4% in 2011. A similar decline has been seen in the U.S. as well, from 26.4% in 2011 to 15.5% in 2022.
- Historically, smoking prevalence among African American adults in Indiana has been higher than among white adults. But in recent years, smoking prevalence rates among African American and white adults have not been statistically different.



## Menthol Cigarette Use Among African Americans

- Tobacco companies have spent billions in targeted marketing towards African Americans for menthol cigarettes.
- Menthol makes cigarette smoke easier to inhale and may facilitate absorption of the harmful chemicals in cigarettes into the body. Additionally, use of menthol cigarettes is likely associated with increased dependence and lower success in quitting smoking.
- In 2022, more than 8 out of 10 (82.0%) Hoosier African American adults who currently smoke reported smoking menthol cigarettes, compared with more than 2 out of 10 (23.6%) white adults who currently smoke.

## Fast Facts

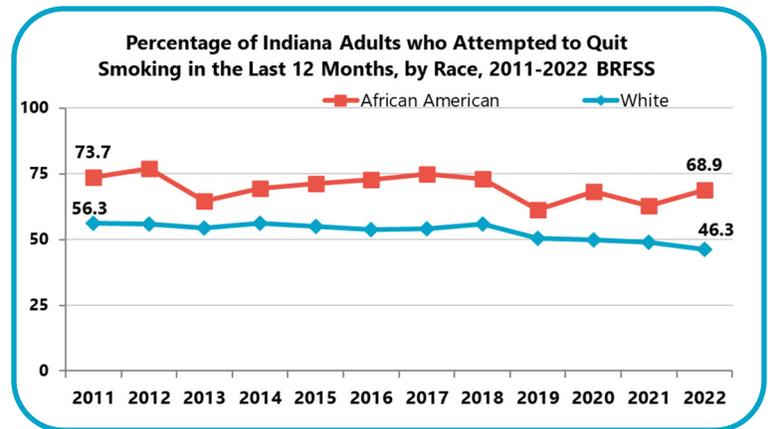
- More than **1 in 6** Hoosier African American adults (17.2%) reported currently smoking cigarettes in 2022.
- The majority of African American adults who reported smoking (82%) smoked menthol cigarettes.
- Over **6 in 10** Hoosier African Americans who smoke intend to quit smoking.
- Nearly **7 in 10** Hoosier African Americans who smoke tried to quit in the past year.
- Nationwide, African American adults who do not smoke are exposed to secondhand smoke at twice the rate as white adults who do not smoke.
- African Americans are more likely to die from smoking-related diseases than whites.
- Smoking increases the risk of heart disease, cancer, and stroke – the three leading causes of death among African Americans.

## Menthol Cigarette Use Among African Americans, cont'd.

- Findings from a Michigan University study state that menthol cigarettes were responsible for 1.5 million new smokers between 1980 and 2018 and while African Americans make up 14% of the adult population, they made up more than 40% of the excessive deaths due to menthol cigarette smoking.
- Currently the FDA has proposed 2 product standards, including prohibiting menthol in cigarettes, and prohibiting flavors in cigars. These proposed changes would aim to reduce the appeal of these products as well as decrease consumption.
- If the sale of menthol-flavored cigarettes is banned, the FDA projects a 15.1% decrease in smoking within 40 years, which would save up to 6,000 Black lives each year.

## Smoking Cessation among African Americans

- In 2022, 69% of Hoosier African Americans who smoke reported attempting to quit at least once in the past year. Rates of quit attempts are generally **higher** among African American adults who smoke cigarettes than white adults who smoke cigarettes in Indiana.
- The proportion of adults remaining abstinent from smoking (no smoking in the past year) is similar across both African American and white adults.



## Secondhand Smoke and Smoke-free Air

- While the prevalence of secondhand smoke exposure among nonsmokers has declined significantly over the last several decades, some groups continue to be exposed at higher rates, including African American adults.
- The rate of secondhand smoke exposure among African American adults who do not smoke, nationwide, continues to be twice as high compared to white adults that do not smoke (48% versus 22%).
- The 2021-2022 Adult Tobacco Survey found that 69% of Hoosier African American adults believed that breathing secondhand smoke is very harmful compared to only 60% of white Hoosiers.
- The majority of Hoosier African Americans (72%) report having smoke-free homes. The proportion of adults living in smoke free homes was similar across African American and white adults.

## Conclusions

While smoking rates have declined among African Americans Hoosiers in recent years, they continue to be unfairly targeted by tobacco industry marketing and exposed to secondhand smoke more than other Hoosiers, putting them at increased risk for poor health outcomes.

## What Can You Do?

- Join a [local tobacco control coalition](#) in your community.
- If you or someone you know needs to quit tobacco, call 1-800-Quit-Now or visit [QuitNowIndiana.com](https://www.QuitNowIndiana.com) for free support.

For additional information on Indiana tobacco prevention and cessation:  
[In.gov/isdh/tpc](https://www.in.gov/isdh/tpc)



Tobacco Prevention  
and Cessation