

Cigarette Smoking among Black Adults in Indiana



Tobacco Prevention
and Cessation

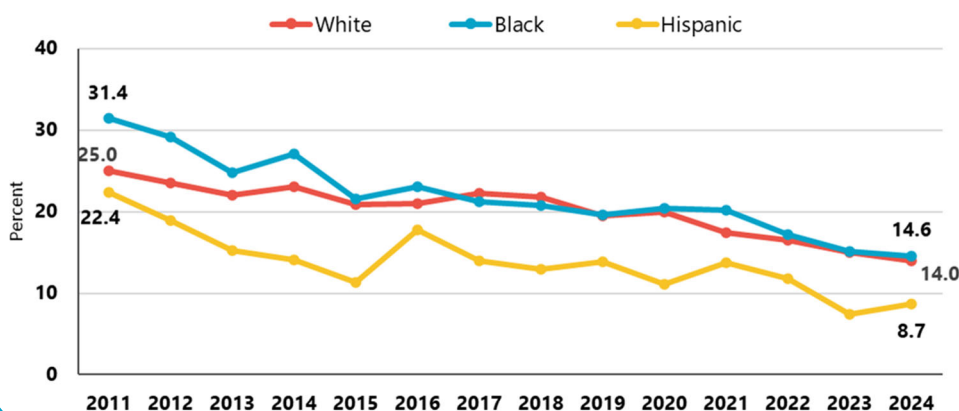
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Everyone deserves the opportunity to be as healthy as possible, free from the harm that commercial tobacco can cause. Tobacco companies have spent billions targeting Black Americans with marketing for menthol cigarettes. Black American adults are also less likely to be protected from secondhand smoke exposure than white adults. Because of these differences historically, adults who are Black have smoked at higher rates than white or Hispanic adults, and more Black American adults have lived with and died from smoking-related diseases than other racial and ethnic groups.

Smoking Prevalence among Black Hoosiers

- In 2024, approximately 1 in 7 Black Hoosier adults (14.6%) 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 11.6% in 2024 (US Median*).
- Historically, smoking prevalence among Black adults in Indiana has been higher than among white adults. But in recent years, smoking prevalence rates among Black and White adults have not been statistically different.⁺

Percent of Indiana Adults Who Currently Smoke by Race/Ethnicity, BRFSS 2011-2024



Fast Facts

- Approximately **1 in 7** Black Hoosier adults (14.6%) reported currently smoking cigarettes in 2024
- The majority of Black Hoosier adults who reported smoking **(85%)** smoked menthol cigarettes
- Over **6 in 10** Black Hoosier adults who smoke intend to quit smoking
- More than **4 in 5** Black Hoosiers who smoke tried to quit in the past year
- Nationwide, Black adults who do not smoke are exposed to secondhand smoke at twice the rate as white adults who do not smoke
- Black adults in the U.S. are more likely to die from smoking-related diseases than white adults
- Smoking increases the risk of heart disease, cancer, and stroke – the three leading causes of death among Black adults in the U.S.

Menthol Cigarette Use Among Black Americans

- Tobacco companies have spent billions in targeted marketing towards Black 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 2024, more than 1 in 5 (84.5%) Black Hoosier adults who currently smoke reported smoking menthol cigarettes, compared with more than 1 in 5 (23.5%) white adults who currently smoke**

*Among 50 states and the District of Columbia with 2024 Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) data.

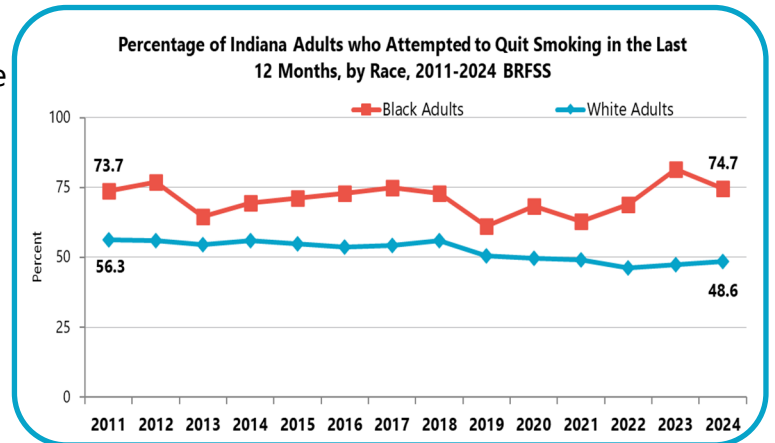
⁺Black and white Americans include only non-Hispanic/non-Latino individuals. Hispanic/Latino individuals may be of any race.

Menthol Cigarette Use Among Black Americans, cont'd.

- Findings from a study out of the University of Michigan state that menthol cigarettes were responsible for 1.5 million new smokers between 1980 and 2018 and while Black Americans make up 14% of the adult population, they made up more than 40% of the excessive deaths due to menthol cigarette smoking
- Public health groups have recommended the removal of menthol in cigarettes, to reduce the appeal of these products as well as decrease consumption. It is estimated that a 15.1% decrease in smoking within 40 years, which would save up to 6,000 Black lives each year in the U.S.

Smoking Cessation among Black Americans

- In 2024, 75% of Black Hoosiers who smoke reported attempting to quit at least once in the past year. Rates of quit attempts are generally **higher** among Black adults who smoke cigarettes than white adults who smoke cigarettes in Indiana
- The proportion of adults remaining abstinent from smoking, (adults who have formerly smoked but quit in the past year) is similar across both Black and White Hoosier 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 Black American Adults
- The rate of secondhand smoke exposure among Black 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 2023-2024 Adult Tobacco Survey found that 60% of Black Hoosier adults believed that breathing secondhand smoke is very harmful, similar to what we see for white Hoosier adults
- While the majority of Black Hoosier adults reported living in a smoke free home (70%), this is still lower than what we see for white Hoosier adults where 88% reported living in a smoke-free home

Conclusion

While smoking rates have declined among Black 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/health/tpc](https://www.in.gov/health/tpc)



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