Smoking and Indiana Women

Tobacco use is the leading preventable cause of death and disease in the United States, and smoking is responsible for an estimated 11,100 deaths in Indiana annually. Smoking greatly impacts women’s health, as women are now as likely as men to die from many diseases caused by smoking.

Smoking among Indiana Women, 2017

- In 2017, 20.2% of women in Indiana were current smokers, a significant decline from 23.8% in 2011.
- Smoking prevalence among Indiana women remains higher than the median smoking prevalence among women nationwide (13.5%).
- Smoking prevalence in 2017 was highest among women ages 25 to 34.
- Smoking prevalence was higher among non-Hispanic white women (21.5%) when compared to both non-Hispanic African American women (15.1%), and Hispanic women (9.2%).
- Smoking prevalence among women declines as education level increases. Nearly 1 in 3 Hoosier women with less than a high school education (32.4%) were current smokers in 2017, compared with about 1 in 16 women who were college graduates (6.0%).

Health Effects of Smoking among Women

The 2014 U.S. Surgeon General’s report on the health consequences of smoking concluded that women are now as likely as men to die from many diseases caused by smoking. Smoking substantially increases women’s risk of several chronic diseases including lung cancer, heart attack, stroke, emphysema, and other chronic illnesses such as diabetes.

Health Effects of Smoking during Pregnancy

Cigarette smoking among women of childbearing age increases the risk of infertility. Smoking among pregnant women also increases the risk of several pregnancy complications, ectopic pregnancy, preterm delivery, stillbirth, low birth weight, and sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS).

Quick Facts:

In 2017, 20.2% of Indiana women smoked cigarettes.

About 5% of high school girls and about 2% of middle school girls in Indiana smoked cigarettes in 2018.

More than 1 in 5 women of childbearing age in Indiana (23.2%) were current smokers in 2017.

In 2017, Indiana’s smoking during pregnancy rate was 13.5%.

Indiana’s smoking during pregnancy rate is almost double the national smoking during pregnancy rate (6.9%).

More than half of Indiana women who smoke tried to quit at least once in the past year.

According to the U.S. Surgeon General, women are now as likely as men to die from many diseases caused by smoking.
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Smoking during Pregnancy in Indiana

- In 2017, Indiana’s smoking during pregnancy rate (13.5%) was considerably higher than the national average (6.9% in 2017*).6,7
- Even more alarming are rates in Indiana counties that exceed state and national averages. Thirty-six counties have a smoking during pregnancy rate significantly higher than the statewide rate, and all but two counties have rates higher than the national average.6

Smoking Cessation among Indiana Women

- In 2017, more than 5 in 10 Hoosier women who were current smokers (56.2%) tried to quit at least once in the past year.3
- More than 1 in 3 Indiana women who smoke (35.7%) report intending to quit within the next 30 days, and about 7 in 10 (72.3%) report ever intending to quit.8

Benefits of Cessation9,10

Quitting smoking has numerous health benefits for women, including:
- Reduced risk of chronic diseases such as heart disease, cancer, chronic lung disease, and stroke
- Reduced risk of infertility among women of childbearing age
- Increased energy levels and easier breathing
- Among pregnant women, reduced risk of low birth weight and premature birth.

Resources for Quitting

The Indiana Tobacco Quitline (1-800-QUIT-NOW) offers free, evidence-based cessation services to help tobacco users quit. Pregnant tobacco users who call the Quitline receive an even greater level of behavioral support – 10 calls instead of 4. The treatment plan is tailored to meet their needs, and for those who quit, the Quitline offers additional postpartum contact to prevent relapse. Tobacco users interested in quitting may call 1-800-QUIT-NOW or visit www.quitnowindiana.com for more resources and information about quitting tobacco.

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9 The national smoking during pregnancy rate is calculated from 48 states and the District of Columbia that reported smoking during pregnancy data in 2017. Updated 06/27/2019.