

Toll of Tobacco in the United States of America



Tobacco Use

- High school students who are current (past month) smokers: 1.8% [Boys: 2.1%, Girls: 1.6%]: 280,000
- High school students who are current e-cigarette users: 7.1%
- High school males who are current cigar smokers: 1.7%
- High school students who are current tobacco users: 9.5%
- High school and middle school students who are current tobacco users: 2.01 million
- Kids (under 18) who try smoking for the first time each day: 1,100+
- Kids (under 18) who try e-cigarettes for the first time each day: 3,500+
- Kids (3-11) exposed to secondhand smoke: 38.1% [Black: 66.2%, White: 38.1%]
- Adults in the USA who currently smoke: 9.9% [Men: 11.5% Women: 8.4%]: 25 million

Death & Disease from Tobacco Use

- Approximately 490,000 Americans die each year from cigarette smoking and exposure to secondhand smoke.
- Over 16 million Americans currently suffer from smoking-caused illness.

Smoking kills more people than alcohol, AIDS, car accidents, illegal drugs, murders, and suicides combined, with thousands more dying from spit tobacco use. Of all the kids who become new smokers each year, almost a third will ultimately die from it. In addition, smokers lose a decade of life because of their smoking. For every person who dies from smoking, at least 30 more are suffering from serious smoking-caused disease and disability.

Tobacco-Related Monetary Costs

- Total annual public and private *health care* expenditures caused by smoking: \$241.4 billion
 - Annual Federal and state government smoking-caused Medicaid payments: \$72.7 billion [Federal share: \$42 billion per year. States' share: \$30.7 billion]
 - Federal smoking-caused Medicare expenditures each year: \$61.1 billion
 - Other federal government tobacco-caused health care costs (e.g., VA health care): \$21.8 billion
- Taxpayers yearly fed/state tax burden from smoking-caused gov't spending: \$1,207 per household
- Annual healthcare expenditures solely from secondhand smoke exposure: \$6.5 billion
- Productivity losses from smoking-caused premature death each year: \$179.9 billion
- Productivity losses from smoking-caused illness¹ each year: \$184.9 billion
- Smoking-caused health costs and productivity losses per pack sold in USA (low estimate): \$51.52
- Weighted average retail price per pack in the USA (including sales tax): \$9.83

Not included in the above are costs from other tobacco use, spending due to dental care or infant and maternal services or other non-healthcare costs from tobacco use, including residential and commercial property losses from smoking-caused fires, tobacco-related cleaning & maintenance, and expenditures through Social Security Survivors insurance for kids who have lost at least one parent from a smoking-caused death.

¹ Includes absenteeism, non-productivity at work, and inability to work due to disability.

Tobacco Industry Advertising & Political Influence

- Annual cigarette and smokeless tobacco industry spending on marketing its products nationwide: \$8.6 billion (\$23.5 million each day)
- Annual e-cigarette company spending on marketing its products nationwide: \$859.4 million

Spending includes the top cigarette, smokeless, and e-cigarette companies. Research has concluded that tobacco industry marketing causes youth to start and continue using tobacco products, and has found that youth are more sensitive to tobacco product marketing than adults.

- Tobacco company PAC and Soft Money contributions to federal candidates/parties/outside spending groups, 2024 election cycle: \$33.9 million
- Tobacco industry expenditures lobbying Congress in 2025: \$37.0 million

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Sources of Information

Youth Cigarette Use. 2025 National Youth Tobacco Survey (NYTS). The 2024 NYTS found that 1.7% of high school students smoked. Current smoker defined as having smoked in the past month. The 2023 National Youth Risk Behavior Survey, using a different methodology than the NYTS, found that 3.5% of U.S. high school kids smoke. See also, Inst. for Social Research, Univ. of Mich., *Monitoring the Future Studies*, <https://monitoringthefuture.org/>. **Youth cigar use.** 2025 NYTS. The 2024 NYTS found that 2.1% of high school males used cigars. **Youth E-Cigarette Use.** 2025 NYTS. The 2024 NYTS found that 7.8% of high school students used e-cigarettes. **Youth Tobacco Use.** 2025 NYTS. The 2024 NYTS found that 10.1% of high school students were tobacco users. Any tobacco product use includes past-month use of e-cigarettes, cigarettes, cigars, smokeless tobacco, hookahs, pipe tobacco, bidis, or heated tobacco products. **Youth initiation.** Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), HHS, *Results from the 2024 National Survey on Drug Use and Health, NSDUH: Detailed Tables*, Table 4.10A, <https://www.samhsa.gov/data/report/2024-nsduh-detailed-tables>. **Secondhand smoke exposure.** Brody DJ, Lu Z, Tsai J, "Secondhand smoke exposure among nonsmoking youth: United States, 2013-2016," *NCHS Data Brief*, 348, 2019. **Adult smoking.** National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS). Percentage of current cigarette smoking for adults aged 18 and over, United States, 2024. National Health Interview Survey. Generated interactively: July 29, 2025 from https://wwwn.cdc.gov/NHISDataQueryTool/SHS_adult/index.html.

Smoking deaths and disease. HHS, *Eliminating Tobacco-Related Disease and Death: Addressing Disparities: A Report of the Surgeon General*, 2024, <https://www.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/2024-sgr-tobacco-related-health-disparities-full-report.pdf>; Smoking-related disease and disability from CDC, *Cigarette Smoking*, <https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/about/index.html>.

Smoking-caused costs. (NOTE: To make all of the cost data more comparable, some figures have been adjusted to 2018 dollars by the CDC's methodology of using the Bureau of Economic Analysis' price indexes for Gross Domestic Products). Shrestha, SS, et al., "Cost of Cigarette Smoking—Attributable Productivity Losses, U.S., 2018," *AJPM*, July 27, 2022. Xu, X, et al., "U.S. healthcare spending attributable to cigarette smoking in 2014," *Preventive Medicine* 150:106529, 2021. HHS, *The Health Consequences of Smoking – 50 Years of Progress A Report of the Surgeon General*, 2014. Federal gov't reimburses the states, on average (weighted), for 57.8% of their Medicaid expenditures (<https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/FR-2024-11-29/pdf/2024-27910.pdf>). **SHS Costs.** Behan, DF, et al., *Economic Effects of Environmental Tobacco Smoke*, Society of Actuaries, March 31, 2005, <https://www.soa.org/globalassets/assets/files/research/projects/etsreportfinaldraftfinal-3.pdf>. **Productivity costs.** Shrestha, SS, et al., "Cost of Cigarette Smoking—Attributable Productivity Losses, U.S., 2018," *AJPM*, July 27, 2022. HHS, *The Health Consequences of Smoking – 50 Years of Progress A Report of the Surgeon General*, 2014. **Tobacco tax burden.** Smoking-caused federal/state tax burden equals listed government expenditures plus 3% of total tobacco-caused health costs to account for unlisted federal/state smoking costs. Xu, X, et al., "U.S. healthcare spending attributable to cigarette smoking in 2014," *Preventive Medicine*, 2021. State tax burden is based on data from CDC, *Best Practices for Comprehensive Tobacco Control Programs*, 2014; CDC, *State Data Highlights*, 2006; CDC, "Medical Care Expenditures Attributable to Smoking—United States, 1993," *MMWR* 43(26):1-4, July 8, 1994. U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey is used for household data. Per pack health and productivity costs calculated using 2018 national pack sales from U.S. Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau. **Average retail price per pack.** Orzechowski & Walker, *The Tax Burden on Tobacco*, 2024, and adjustments for industry price promotions, price increases, cigarette tax increases, and inflation.

Examples of non-health care costs from tobacco use. U.S. Dept. of the Treasury, *Economic Costs of Smoking in the U.S. and the Benefits of Comprehensive Tobacco Legislation*, 1998; Chaloupka, FJ & Warner, KE, "The Economics of Smoking," in Culyer, A & Newhouse, J, (eds), *The Handbook of Health Economics*, 2000. **Fire costs.** Nat'l Fire Protection Association, *Home Structure Fires Started by Smoking Materials*, 2025, <https://www.nfpa.org/News-and-Research/Data-research-and-tools/US-Fire-Problem/Smoking-Materials>; U.S. Fire Administration, *Residential Building Smoking Fire Trends (2014-2023)*, <https://www.usfa.fema.gov/statistics/residential-fires/smoking.html>. **Cleaning and maintenance costs.** Mudarri, D, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, *Costs and Benefits of Smoking Restrictions: An Assessment of the Smoke-Free Environment Act of 1993 (H.R. 3434)*, submitted to Subcommittee on Health and the Environment; Energy and Commerce Committee, U.S. House of Representatives, April 1994. CDC, *Making Your Workplace Smokefree: A Decision Maker's Guide*, 1996. **Smoking & SSSI costs:** Leistikow, B, et al., "Estimates of Smoking-Attributable Deaths at Ages 15-54, Motherless or Fatherless Youths, and Resulting Social Security Costs in the United States in 1994," *Preventive Medicine* 30(5):353-360, May 2000.

Tobacco industry marketing spending. U.S. Federal Trade Commission (FTC), *Cigarette Report for 2022*, October 2023, https://www.ftc.gov/system/files/ftc_gov/pdf/2022-Cigarette-Report.pdf [data for top 4 manufacturers only]; FTC, *Smokeless Tobacco Report for 2022*, October 2023, https://www.ftc.gov/system/files/ftc_gov/pdf/2022-Smokeless-Tobacco-Report.pdf [data for top 5 manufacturers only]; FTC, *E-Cigarette Report for 2021*, April 3, 2024, https://www.ftc.gov/system/files/ftc_gov/pdf/E-CigaretteReportfor2021.pdf [data for top 9 manufacturers only]. **Tobacco marketing research.** HHS, *Eliminating Tobacco-Related Disease and Death: Addressing Disparities: A Report of the Surgeon General*, 2024; HHS, *Preventing Tobacco Use Among Youth and Young Adults: A Report of the Surgeon General*, 2012; National Cancer Institute (NCI), *The Role of the Media in Promoting and Reducing Tobacco Use, Smoking and Tobacco Control Monograph No. 19*, 2008, http://cancercontrol.cancer.gov/tcrb/monographs/19/m19_complete.pdf. See also, Campaign factsheet, *Tobacco Marketing to Kids*, <http://www.tobaccofreekids.org/research/factsheets/pdf/0008.pdf>.

Tobacco industry political contributions, lobbying. Federal Election Commission. Center for Responsive Politics, <http://www.opensecrets.org>. Data released 2026 except for tobacco company PAC and Soft Money contributions to federal candidates/parties/outside spending group, which is from the 2024 election cycle.

Related Campaign Factsheets available at <http://www.tobaccofreekids.org> or <https://www.tobaccofreekids.org/fact-sheets>.