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## Tobacco Addiction (Nicotine)

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### Brief Description

Through the use of tobacco, nicotine is one of the most heavily used addictive drugs and the leading preventable cause of disease, disability, and death in the U.S. Cigarette smoking accounts for 90% of lung cancer cases in the U.S., and about 38,000 deaths per year can be attributed to secondhand smoke. Cigarettes and chew tobacco are illegal substances in most U.S. states for those under 18; a handful of states have raised the age to 19.

### Effects

Nicotine is highly addictive. The tar in cigarettes increases a smoker's risk of lung cancer, emphysema, and bronchial disorders. The carbon monoxide in smoke increases the chance of cardiovascular diseases. Pregnant smokers have a higher risk of miscarriage or low birthweight babies. Secondhand smoke causes lung cancer in adults and greatly increases the risk of respiratory illnesses in children.

### Statistics and Trends

<b>2012 Monitoring the Future (MTF) Study: for 8th-Graders, 10th-Graders, and 12th-Graders (in percent)*</b>				
<b>Drug</b>	<b>Time Period</b>	<b>8th-Graders</b>	<b>10th-Graders</b>	<b>12th-Graders</b>
Cigarettes (any use)	Lifetime	[15.5]	[27.7]	39.5
	Past Month	[4.9]	10.8	17.1
	Daily	1.9	5	9.3
	1/2 pack +/-day	0.6	1.5	4
Smokeless Tobacco	Lifetime	8.1	15.4	17.4
	Past Month	2.8	6.4	7.9

Daily	0.5	2	3.2
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[Previous MTF Data](#)

2011 National Survey of Drug Use and Health (NSDUH) for Ages 12 and Older (in percent)*					
Drug	Time Period	Ages 12 or Older	Ages 12-17	Ages 18-25	Ages 26 or Older
Cigarettes (any use)	Lifetime	[62.8]	[19.1]	61.0	[68.6]
	Past Year	[26.1]	[13.2]	42.3	24.9
	Past Month	[22.1]	7.8	33.5	21.9
Smokeless Tobacco	Lifetime	18	6.8	20.4	18.9
	Past Year	4.6	4.5	[9.4]	3.7
	Past Month	3.2	2.1	[5.4]	3.0

[Previous NSDUH Data](#)

## Related Publications



### **Cigarettes and Other Tobacco Products (DrugFacts)**

Revised December 2012.

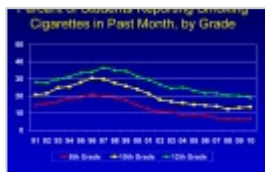
Provides an overview of the effects of cigarette and other tobacco products, including their effect on their brain, other health effects, approaches to smoking or nicotine cessation, and overall use among youth. [En Español](#)



### **Tobacco Addiction (Research Reports)**

Published July 1998. Revised July 2012.

Discusses the harmful effects of tobacco use, risks associated with pregnancy and adolescents, as well as best practices for the prevention and treatment of tobacco addiction. [En Español](#)



### **Tobacco Addiction (Topics in Brief)**

Revised June 2012.

Examines the scope of tobacco use in the U.S., what makes it addictive, and potential treatment options for tobacco addiction.



### **Tobacco and Nicotine Research (Topics in Brief)**

Revised August 2008.

Provides an update on the scientific information on nicotine and tobacco, including basic research on their biological effects, the scope of use, prenatal exposure, and treatment.



### **Tobacco Addiction (Mind Over Matter)**

Published January 1998.

Describes how nicotine acts on the heart to change heart rate and blood pressure, and discusses dependency, treatment, and effects of long-term nicotine use. [En Español](#)

## Related NIDA Notes Articles

[Adolescent Cigarette, Alcohol Use Declines as Marijuana Use Rises](#) (February 2013)

[View more related publications](#)

[Nicotine Makes Mouse Brain More Responsive to Cocaine](#) (February 2013)

[Animation: Building an Anti-Drug Vaccine](#) (December 2012)

[Adolescent Smoking and Drinking at Historic Lows](#) (July 2012)

[The Present and Promise of mHealth](#) (July 2012)

[Prevention System Has Lasting Effects, Benefit Exceeds Costs](#) (July 2012)

[Investigators Map Functional Networks in the Rat Brain](#) (June 2012)

[Elevated Rates of Drug Abuse Continue for Second Year](#) (June 2012)

[Tobacco Smokers Have High Probability of Transition to Dependence](#) (April 2012)

[Cognitive Strategy Reduces Craving by Altering Brain Activity](#) (April 2012)

[View more related NIDA Notes](#)

## Related News Releases

[Prior marijuana use could increase addictive power of nicotine](#) (March 2013)

[Regular marijuana use by teens continues to be a concern](#) (December 2012)

[NIDA announces 2012 SCOR Awards for research on gender differences](#) (November 2012)

[Odds of quitting smoking affected by genetics](#) (May 2012)

[NIDA creates easy-to-read website on drug abuse](#) (February 2012)

[New NIDA resource helps families navigate addiction treatment options](#) (January 2012)

[Cigarette and alcohol use at historic low among teens](#) (December 2011)

[NIH study examines nicotine as a gateway drug](#) (November 2011)

[FDA and NIH announce joint study on tobacco use and risk perceptions](#) (October 2011)

[NIDA Avant-Garde-Medications Development Award winners announced](#) (September 2011)

[Moderate levels of secondhand smoke deliver nicotine to the brain](#) (July 2011)

[Potential new target for smoking cessation without weight gain](#) (June 2011)

[First NIDA Avant-Garde Awards for Medications Development Research](#) (September 2010)

[Studies on Combat Related Substance Use and Abuse to be Funded by NIH and VA](#) (August 2010)

[Computer Modeling to Identify New Medications for Nicotine Addiction Wins First Place NIDA Addiction Science Award at 2010 Intel ISEF](#) (May 2010)

## Related Resources

[Population Assessment of Tobacco and Health Study \(PATH\)](#) - A national longitudinal study of tobacco use and how it affects the health of people in the United States, led by NIDA and the Food and Drug Administration

[Treating Tobacco Use and Dependence Guidelines](#)

[NIDA for Teens: Tobacco Addiction](#)

[Guidance for Parents on Keeping Kids Smoke-Free](#) (Letter from NIDA's former director) (Archives)

[Tobacco Regulatory Science Program \(TRSP\)](#) (NIH/FDA collaboration)

[Prevent and Reduce Tobacco Use \(HHS Secretary\)](#)

[Online Guide to Quit Smoking \(NCI\)](#)

[The Virtual Office of the Surgeon General](#) - Guidelines to Quit Smoking

[Transdisciplinary Tobacco Use Research Centers](#) - NIDA, the National Cancer Institute, and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation: Studying new ways to combat tobacco use

## Other Resources

[MEDLINEplus Health Information on Drug Abuse](#) - National Library of Medicine, NIH

[www.abovetheinfluence.com](#) - Office of National Drug Control Policy

[healthfinder.gov](#) - U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

Past information on many drugs of abuse is available on our [Archives](#) site.

*This page was last updated July 2012*



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