

Smoking and COVID-19

COVID-19 is a contagious respiratory disease caused by a novel coronavirus.¹ Symptoms of COVID-19 often include fever, cough, and shortness of breath and may progress to pneumonia and respiratory failure.¹ Severe cases of COVID-19 can result in hospitalization or death.¹ People who smoke including long-term smokers and e-cigarette users may be more susceptible to COVID-19, and people with smoking-related chronic illnesses such as lung disease, heart disease, and diabetes may be at increased risk of COVID-19-related complications.^{2,4}

COVID-19 Risk among Smokers

In 2018, over 1 in 5 Hoosier adults (21.1%) smoked cigarettes.³ Cigarette smoking can harm the immune system, which may increase the risk of respiratory infections such as COVID-19.² People who smoke are considered immunocompromised and could be at increased risk for serious adverse effects from the COVID-19.^{2,9}

Smoking-related Health Conditions and COVID-19

Smoking increases the risk of a number of chronic health conditions, including chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), type 2 diabetes, and heart disease.² Adults with these conditions are at greater risk of COVID-19 related complications that may result in hospitalization or death.⁴

Secondhand Smoke Exposure and Respiratory Diseases among Children

Exposure to secondhand smoke increases the risk of a number of respiratory health problems among children, including lower respiratory illnesses.⁵ Additionally, exposure to secondhand smoke can worsen the frequency and severity of asthma attacks among children with asthma.⁵ Both children and adults with chronic health problems such as moderate to severe asthma are at greater risk of severe illness from COVID-19.⁶

Steps to Protect Yourself and Your Family

- Good hygiene practices, including covering coughs and sneezes and frequent handwashing (for at least 20 seconds), can help reduce the spread of the COVID-19 virus.¹
- If you are symptomatic including a fever, a cough or difficulty breathing call your healthcare provider for medical advice. Most people with COVID-19 develop mild symptoms and can recover at home. Staying home and away from others is the best way to reduce the spread of the virus.⁷
- For those who smoke, quitting smoking reduces the risk of smoking-related health problems.^{8,9}

Quick Facts

- COVID-19 is a contagious respiratory disease caused by a novel coronavirus.¹
- People who smoke may have an increased risk of severe illness from COVID-19.^{2,9}
- Over 1 in 5 Hoosier adults (21.1%) were current smokers in 2018.³
- Smoking increases the risk of several chronic diseases including COPD, diabetes, and heart disease. People with these conditions have an increased risk of COVID-19-related complications.²
- Children exposed to secondhand smoke have an increased risk of lower respiratory illnesses.⁵
- Quitting smoking reduces the risk of smoking-related health problems.^{8,9}
- The Indiana Tobacco Quitline (1-800-QUIT NOW) provides free support and resources to Hoosiers who want to quit.

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- For Hoosiers interested in quitting cigarettes or other forms of tobacco, the Indiana Tobacco Quitline (1-800-QUIT-NOW, www.QuitNowIndiana.com) provides free evidence-based support, advice and resources.
- Eliminate you and your family's exposure to secondhand smoke.
- Young people interested in quitting vaping can text 'Indiana' to 88709 to enroll in the *This is Quitting* test messaging program.
- To prevent health complications due to secondhand smoke, do not allow smoking in your home or vehicle.

References

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- ⁶ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2020, April 2). People with severe to moderate asthma. Retrieved April 10, 2020 from <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/need-extra-precautions/asthma.html>.
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