

# Tobacco Use Among People with Disabilities in Indiana



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Everyone deserves the opportunity to be as healthy as possible, regardless of disability status. In Indiana, about **3 in 10** adults reported having a mental, physical, or emotional disability.<sup>1</sup> Those living with a disability are more likely to have poorer health, experience more limitations in everyday functioning, engage in behaviors like smoking that increase health risks, and die earlier from chronic diseases like cancer because they are more exposed to risk factors and because they experience differences in access to prevention and treatment.<sup>3</sup>

The Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) collects data on health behaviors such as tobacco use across the United States, including Indiana. BRFSS recognizes several types of disabilities and groups them based on specific challenges associated with everyday functions:

- **Blind or have serious difficulty seeing**
- **Deaf or have serious difficulty hearing**
- **Have serious difficulty concentrating, remembering, or making decisions because of a physical, mental or emotional condition**
- **Have difficulty dressing or bathing**
- **Have serious difficulty walking or climbing stairs**
- **Have difficulty running errands alone because of a physical, mental or emotional condition**

## Fast Facts

- **31%** of Indiana adults reported having a **mental, physical, or emotional disability**
- Adults with disabilities **smoke cigarettes** at almost **two times** the rate of adults without disabilities in Indiana.
- Adults with disabilities are significantly more likely to **use e-cigarettes** than adults without disabilities.

## Smoking Prevalence Among Adults with Disabilities

Adults with disabilities report **higher rates of cigarette smoking** than adults without disabilities. In the United States, nearly 1 in 5 (18.5%) adults with any kind of disability smoke cigarettes, compared to 1 in 10 (10.9%) adults without a disability.<sup>2</sup> In Indiana, about **1 in 5** (20.3%) people with a disability report currently smoking cigarettes — **nearly double** the rate of current cigarette smoking among Hoosiers without a disability (10.9%).<sup>1</sup>

Smoking is more prevalent among adults who reported having certain types of disabilities. In Indiana, **smoking is highest** among people who have **difficulty dressing or bathing**, people who are **blind or have difficulty seeing**, people who have **serious difficulty concentrating, remembering, or making decisions**, or **difficulty running errands alone** due to a mental, physical, or emotional condition.<sup>1</sup>

### Current Smoking Prevalence Among Indiana Adults with Disabilities by Disability Type



## E-Cigarette Use Among Adults with Disabilities

Adults with any kind of disability report **significantly higher rates of e-cigarette use** than adults without disabilities. Across the U.S., 8.0% of adults with a disability use e-cigarettes, compared to 3.9% of adults without a disability.<sup>2</sup> In Indiana, about **1 in 10** (11.2%) of adults with disabilities used e-cigarettes in 2024, compared to 8.2% of adults without a disability.<sup>1</sup>

Among Indiana adults with disabilities, **e-cigarette use is highest** among those who reported being **blind or having difficulty seeing, having serious difficulty concentrating, remembering, or making decisions, and those who have difficulty running errands alone.**<sup>1</sup>

### Current E-Cigarette Use Among Indiana Adults with Disabilities by Disability Type



## Tobacco Treatment and Access to Support

People with disabilities **want to quit smoking and vaping**. In Indiana, **more than half** (53.7%) of adults with a disability who currently smoke cigarettes tried to quit at least once in the past year.<sup>1</sup> However, they often face considerable difficulty accessing and utilizing health care services, including tobacco cessation programs.<sup>4,5</sup>

Transportation difficulties, inaccessible healthcare facilities and equipment, health insurance coverage, and healthcare costs can pose a barrier to accessing health services and tobacco treatment for people with disabilities.<sup>5,6</sup> Additionally, providers may lack the knowledge or tools needed to effectively communicate with people with disabilities, and may be less likely to screen people with disabilities for tobacco use or offer them tobacco treatment options.<sup>3,4,5</sup> Furthermore, tobacco cessation programs are typically designed for the general population, and do not account for the physical and/or cognitive impairments, activity limitations, and participation restrictions experienced by people with disabilities.<sup>3,6</sup>

### What Can You Do?

To help people with disabilities who want to quit smoking or vaping, healthcare providers can:<sup>5,7</sup>

- **Ask every patient about tobacco use**
- **Involve caregivers in prevention and treatment**
- **Train staff to improve communication and reduce bias**
- **Provide tailored prevention and treatment**
- **Ensure accessible facilities and communicate in plain language**
- **Refer people who are ready to quit to Quit Now Indiana**

**The Inclusive Provider Self-Audit Tool** is a free resource that providers can use to assess and improve the inclusivity of their healthcare organizations to people with disabilities.

**Quit Now Indiana** offers free cessation services to Hoosiers who want to quit tobacco, and includes accessibility features like ADA and WCAG compliant website and web content and a TTY-based telecommunications line for the hearing impaired **1-877-777-6534**. People who use tobacco may call **1-800-QUIT-NOW** or visit **[QuitNowIndiana.com](https://www.QuitNowIndiana.com)** for more resources and information.

For additional information on Indiana tobacco prevention and cessation: [in.gov/health/tpc](https://in.gov/health/tpc)



Tobacco Prevention and Cessation

# References

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