

# Indiana Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Communities and Tobacco Use

Tobacco use is the single most preventable cause of death and disease in the United States. Annually, tobacco use causes more deaths than alcohol, AIDS, car accidents, illegal drugs, murders and suicides, combined. The impact of tobacco on Indiana is staggering, causing approximately 11,100 deaths annually. Research indicates that both nationally and in Indiana, tobacco use is higher among lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) individuals compared with the general population, substantially affecting the health of LGBT communities.<sup>1,2</sup>

## Current Smoking among Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual Adults – United States

- Historically, there has been little research on the health of LGBT individuals nationwide.
- National Health Interview Survey (NHIS) data indicate that lesbian, gay and bisexual (LGB) adults are significantly more likely to currently smoke cigarettes than straight adults.<sup>1</sup>

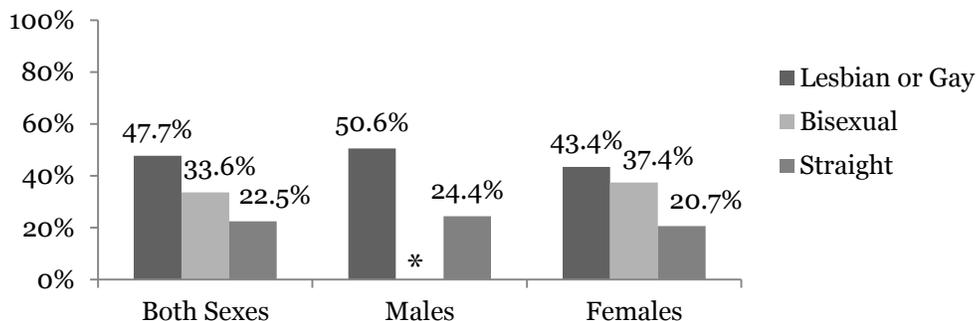
	Lesbian or Gay	Bisexual	Straight
Both sexes	27.2% <sup>†</sup>	29.5% <sup>†</sup>	19.6%
Males	27.2%	29.6%	22.3%
Females	27.2% <sup>†</sup>	29.4% <sup>†</sup>	16.9%

<sup>†</sup>Significantly higher than among straight individuals. No data available for transgender individuals.

## Current Smoking among Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual Adults - Indiana

- Indiana Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) data indicate that for both sexes combined, lesbian or gay individuals were over two times more likely to currently smoke cigarettes than straight individuals in 2014.
- For both sexes combined, bisexual individuals were nearly 50% more likely to smoke cigarettes than straight individuals.
- Over half (50.6%) of gay men currently smoke, compared with 24.4% of straight men.
- A higher proportion of lesbian or gay women (43.4%) and bisexual women (37.4%) report smoking compared with straight women (20.7%).

**Prevalence of current smoking among Indiana adults by sexual orientation, BRFSS 2014<sup>2</sup>**



\*Data for transgender individuals and bisexual males are suppressed due to insufficiently reliable estimates. Due to differences in data collection methodology, Indiana estimates are not directly comparable to U.S. estimates presented in this fact sheet.



## **Current Smoking among Indiana LGB\* Adults, by Age**

- In both age groups, lesbian and gay adults smoked at higher rates than straight adults. Notably, over half (51.9%) of lesbian and gay adults ages 18-49 currently smoke.
- Bisexual adults ages 18-49 also smoked at higher rates than straight adults.

Age group	Lesbian or gay	Bisexual	Straight
18-49	51.9%	37.3%	27.1%
50+	39.2%	16.3%	17.6%

## **E-Cigarette Use**

Indiana Adult Tobacco Survey (IATS) data indicate that in 2015 LGBT\*\* individuals were significantly more likely than straight individuals to have ever tried electronic cigarettes (e-cigarettes) (46.5% vs. 16.4%, respectively).<sup>3</sup> E-cigarettes are being promoted as a less dangerous alternative to cigarettes or smoking cessation aid; however, e-cigarettes have not been approved as safe by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA). The FDA has warned the public that e-cigarettes contain various toxic and carcinogenic (cancer causing) chemicals.

## **Smoking Cessation**

An estimated 43.4% of LGBT\*\* adult smokers in Indiana report not intending to quit at any point in the future compared with 27.8% of straight adult smokers.<sup>3</sup>

## **Factors Contributing to Tobacco Use Disparities among LGBT Populations**

A number of factors may contribute to the higher prevalence of tobacco use among LGBT communities, including:

- Direct targeting by tobacco companies, including direct and indirect media advertising and sponsorship of LGBT events<sup>4</sup>
- Discrimination, violence, and stress experienced by LGBT communities<sup>5</sup>
- Barriers to accessing health care and cessation treatment services<sup>5</sup>
- Higher prevalence of risk factors such as alienation, low self-esteem, and depression among LGB youth.<sup>6</sup>

## **Resources for Quitting Tobacco Use**

Tobacco users should contact a health care provider for assistance and call 1-800-Quit-Now or visit [www.QuitNowIndiana.com](http://www.QuitNowIndiana.com) for free, evidence-based support, advice and resources.

---

<sup>1</sup> Ward BW, Dahlhamer JM, Galinsky AM, Joestl SS. Sexual orientation and health among U.S. adults: National Health Interview Survey, 2013. National health statistics reports; no 77. Hyattsville, MD: National Center for Health Statistics. 2014.

<sup>2</sup> 2014 Indiana Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System

<sup>3</sup> 2015 Indiana Adult Tobacco Survey

<sup>4</sup> American Cancer Society. Tobacco and the GLBT Community. 2003.

<sup>5</sup> Lee JG, Griffin GK, Melvin CL. Tobacco use among sexual minorities in the USA, 1987 to May 2007: a systematic review. *Tobacco Control* 2009; 18 (4):275-282.

<sup>6</sup> Ryan H, Wortley P, Easton A, Pederson L, Greenwood G. Smoking among lesbians, gays, and bisexuals: a review of the literature. *American Journal of Preventive Medicine* 2001. 21(2): 142-149. As cited in American Legacy Foundation. Lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender communities and smoking. 2005. Accessed July 13, 2015. <http://lgbttobacco.org/files/legacy%20lgbt%20factsheet.pdf>.

\*Indiana BRFSS data for transgender individuals are suppressed due to insufficiently reliable estimates.

\*\*Indiana Adult Tobacco Survey data are available only for LGBT individuals in aggregate. These data should be interpreted with caution due to the relatively small sample size of LGBT survey respondents.

