

## Smoking Prevalence by Gender

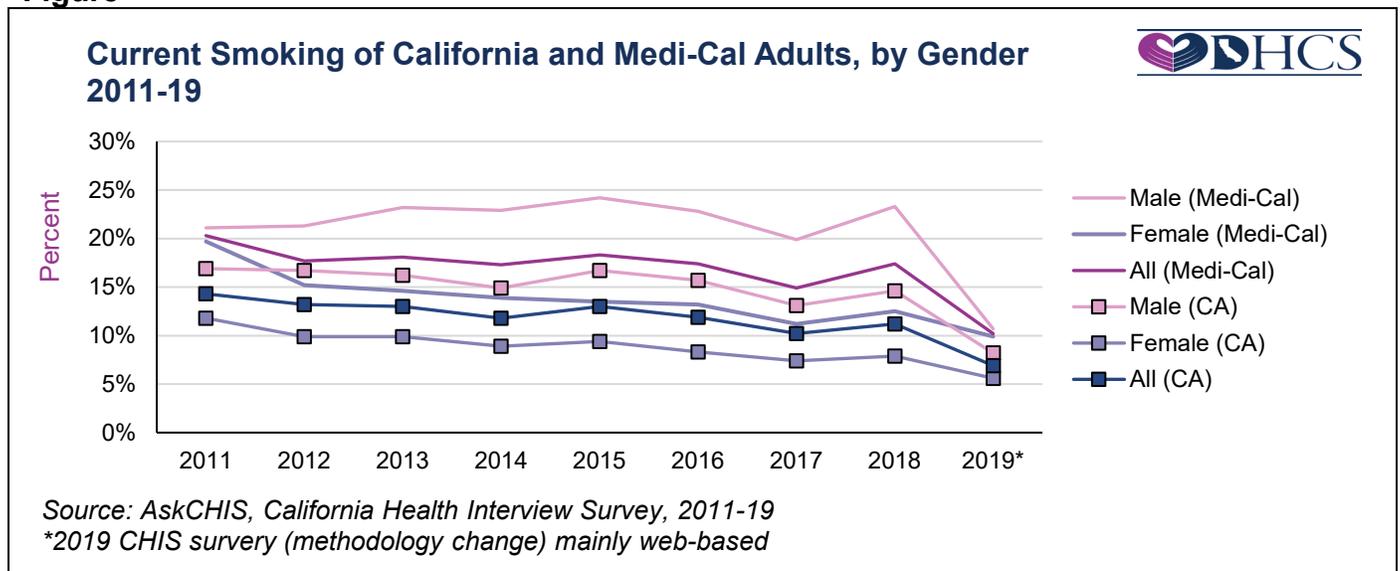


Smoking remains a national and state public health issue, with 1 in 5 deaths each year in the United States (U.S.) attributed to smoking,<sup>1</sup> and the number of Californian smokers at close to 4 million, exceeding the entire populations of 21 U.S. states.<sup>2</sup> In California, tobacco is one of the leading causes of mortality and morbidity.<sup>4</sup> Smoking in the U.S. causes 87% of lung cancer deaths, 32% of coronary heart deaths, and 79% of all cases of chronic obstructive pulmonary diseases (COPD).<sup>1</sup> However, quitting before the age of 40 can reduce the risk of dying from a smoking-related disease by about 90%.<sup>5</sup>

There continues to be a gender difference in smoking rates, with men reporting higher rates than women (5-10% difference).<sup>3</sup> Over the past 50 years, women's risk of smoking related diseases has increased, and now more women are dying from COPD than men.

In 2019, the smoking rate for California was 7%, while it was 10% for the Medi-Cal population. Males consistently had higher smoking rates than their female counterparts in both the Medi-Cal and the general California population regardless of the year.

**Figure**



1. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. [The Health Consequences of Smoking—50 Years of Progress: A Report of the Surgeon General](#). Atlanta: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Office on Smoking and Health, 2014. Accessed Jan 2017.
2. California Department of Public Health, California Tobacco Control Program, *California Tobacco Facts and Figures, 2015*, Sacramento, CA: California Department of Public Health, 2015.
3. California Department of Public Health, California Tobacco Control Program, *California Tobacco Facts and Figures, 2016*, Sacramento, CA: California Department of Public Health, 2016.
4. Department of Health Care Services. *Quitting Smoking Just Got Easier for Medi-Cal Members*. 2013. [https://www.dhcs.ca.gov/individuals/Documents/MIQS%20Patient%20Flyers/MIQS\\_News\\_Release\\_9-30-13.pdf](https://www.dhcs.ca.gov/individuals/Documents/MIQS%20Patient%20Flyers/MIQS_News_Release_9-30-13.pdf). Accessed Aug. 26, 2020.
5. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Tobacco-related mortality. [https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/data\\_statistics/fact\\_sheets/health\\_effects/tobacco\\_related\\_mortality/index.htm](https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/data_statistics/fact_sheets/health_effects/tobacco_related_mortality/index.htm). Published May 15, 2017. Accessed April 20 2018.

[Link to Data Sources and Methods](#)