

Smoking Prevalence By Insurance

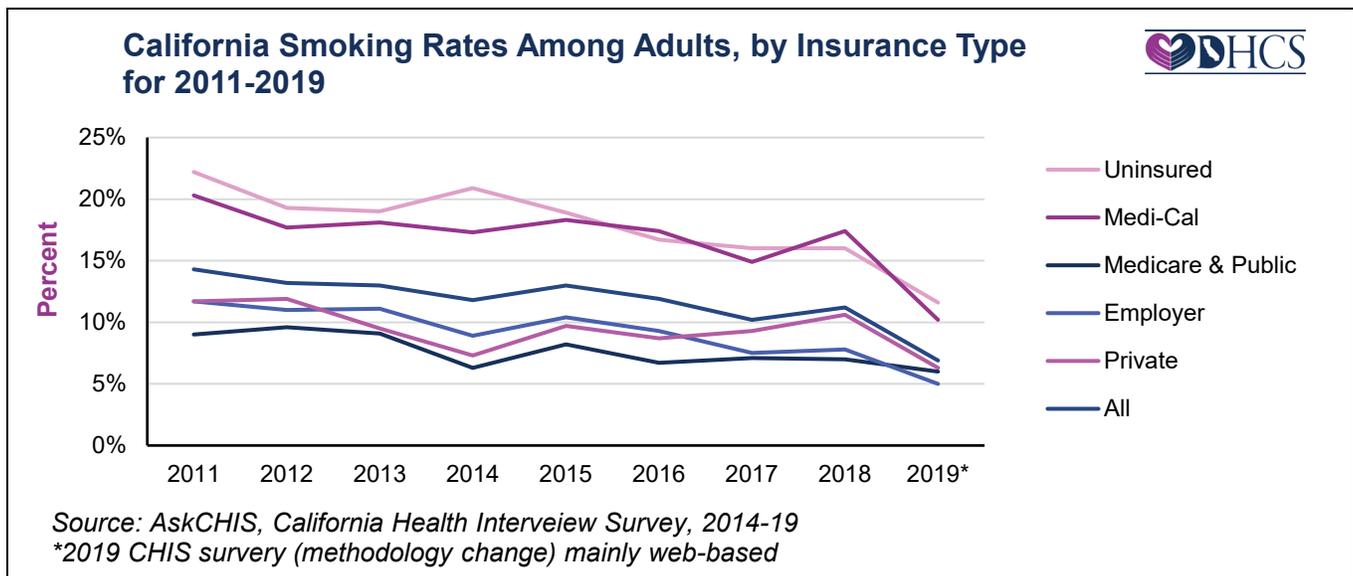


While smoking prevalence has declined over the years, it remains a costly national and state public health issue. 1 in 5 deaths each year in the United States (U.S.) is attributed to smoking, and California has the largest number of smokers in U.S.¹ The U.S. economic cost of smoking is estimated at more than \$300 billion in direct health care costs and lost productivity.² In California, smoking-attributable illnesses are 11% of Medi-Cal medical expenditures.³ Research has shown higher rates of smoking among those in Medicaid and those uninsured, and in some cases, these smoking rates are more than twice that of adults with private health insurance.⁴

Smoking is a risk factor for various chronic diseases and cancers; however, quitting can mitigate and in some cases eliminate these health risks.¹ Research has found that while many smokers want to quit, it takes multiple quit attempts before being successful.¹ However, those who are able to quit smoking before age 40 decrease their risk of dying from smoking-related diseases by 90%.⁵

In 2019, the smoking rate for Californian adults was 7%, compared to 10% for the Medi-Cal population. From 2011 to 2019, the adult smoking rates were highest among those without insurance, except in 2016 and 2018 when the Medi-Cal group had the highest rate.

Figure



1. California Department of Public Health, California Tobacco Control Program, *California Tobacco Facts and Figures, 2018*, Sacramento, CA: California Department of Public Health, 2018.
2. Jamal A, et al. Current cigarette smoking among adults — United States, 2005–2014. *MMWR Morb Mortal Wkly Rep* 2015;64:1233-1240.
3. 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. Published Sept 13, 2020. Accessed Aug. 26, 2020.
4. Centers of Disease Prevention and Control. *Smoking Rates for Uninsured and Adults on Medicaid more than Twice those for Adults with Private Health Insurance*. <https://www.cdc.gov/media/releases/2015/p1112-smoking-rates.html>. Accessed Aug. 8, 2020.
5. Jha P, Ramasundarahettige C, Landsman V, et al. 21st Century hazards of smoking and benefits of cessation in the United States. *New England JN of Med*, 2013;368(4):341-50.