

Cigarette smoking continues to be an issue in Vermont, with approximately 1,000 adults dying from a smoking-related illness each year.<sup>1</sup> In addition, the use of electronic vaping products (EVP) is increasing. EVPs are battery powered devices, such as e-cigarettes, vape pens, and e-cigars that usually contain nicotine and flavors such as fruit, mint or candy.<sup>2</sup> The Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) uses the term “e-cigarette” to refer to all EVPs; we do the same.

This brief summarizes tobacco measures from the 2021 Vermont BRFSS for adults ages 18 and older.<sup>3</sup> Prevalence of current cigarette use, e-cigarette use and smoking quit attempts are presented by key demographic subgroups. Smoking prevalence and quit attempt data presented are age adjusted to the standard U.S. 2000 adult population according to Healthy People guidelines and indicated by †. E-cigarette use and estimated counts are not age adjusted.

### 2021 KEY POINTS

- **16% of VT adults smoke cigarettes.**
- **Attempts to quit smoking cigarettes have decreased to their lowest level in the past decade (47%).**
- **One in 20 adults currently use e-cigarettes (5%), nearly double the rate in 2017 (3%).**
- **Young adults ages 18-24 use e-cigarettes at three times the statewide rate (16% vs. 5%).**

### Adult Tobacco Use

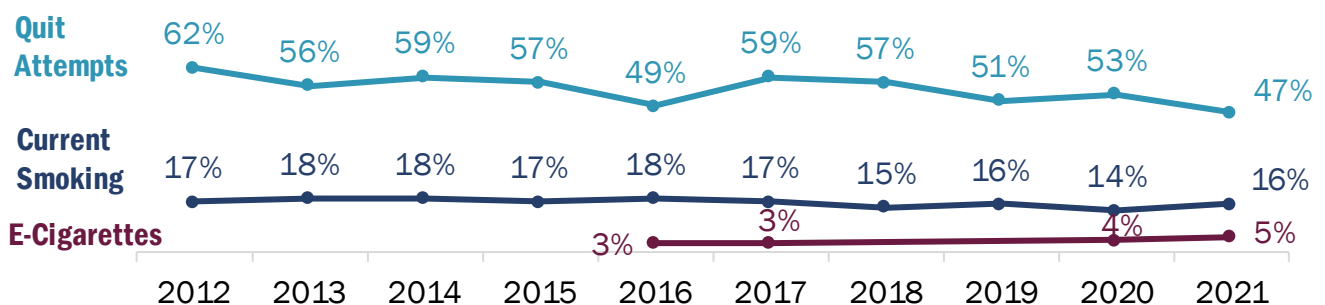
Sixteen percent of adult Vermonters report current use of cigarettes, five percent use e-cigarettes and three percent use smokeless tobacco products. Among adults who currently smoke cigarettes, 47% tried to quit smoking in the past 12 months.

### Current Tobacco Use Prevalence & Quit Attempts in Vermont, BRFSS 2021

	%	Estimated Vermonters <sup>‡</sup>
Cigarette Smoking	16.1 <sup>†</sup>	73,300
E-Cigarette Use	5.0	24,900
Smokeless Tobacco Use	2.6	12,800
Quit Attempts among Adults who Smoke	46.7 <sup>†</sup>	32,700

The rates of cigarette use, e-cigarette use and smoking quit attempts in 2021 are statistically similar to 2020 rates. The 2021 rate of quit attempts is significantly lower than 2017 and use of e-cigarettes statistically increased from 2017. E-cigarette data was not collected in 2018 or 2019.

### Trends in Smoking Prevalence<sup>†</sup>, Quit Attempts<sup>†</sup> and E-Cigarette Use among Vermont Adults, BRFSS 2012-2021



## CIGARETTE USE & QUIT ATTEMPTS - DEMOGRAPHICS

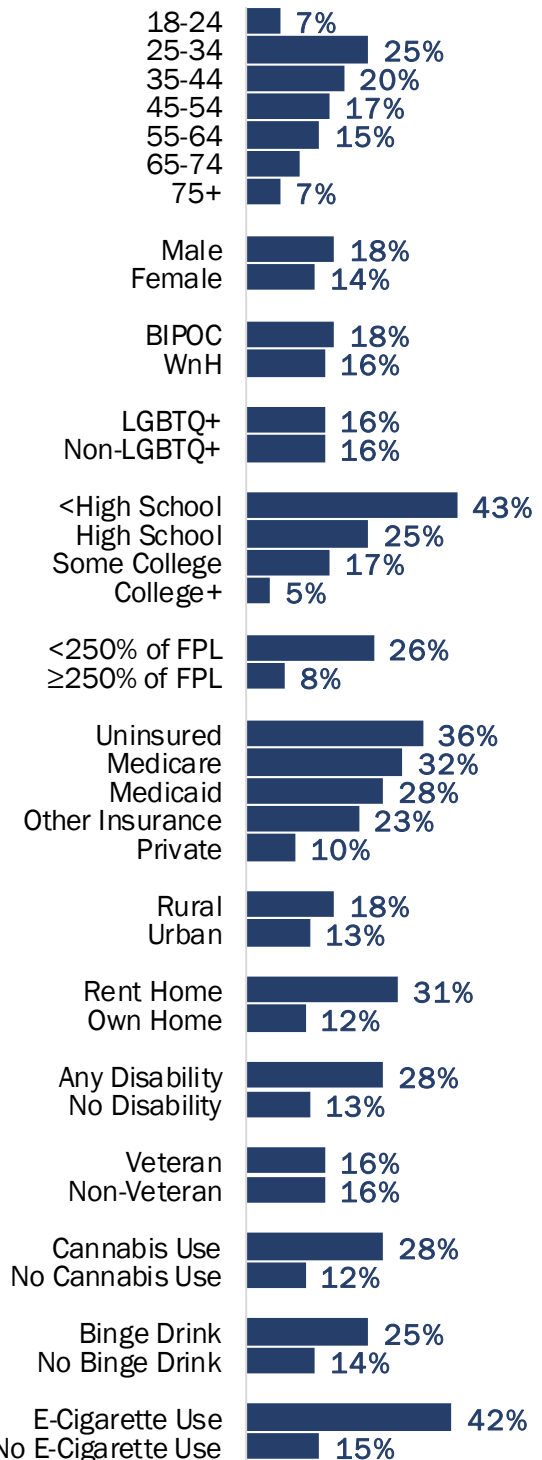
Cigarette smoking rates among Vermont adults differ significantly by age, education, income, insurance type, geography, home ownership, disability status, cannabis use, binge drinking and e-cigarette use.

- Current smoking is significantly higher in adults ages 25-34 (25%) and 35-44 (20%) years compared to adults 18-24 (7%), 65-74 (11%) and 75 and older (7%).
- Smoking rates differ significantly with increasing levels of education. Adults with a grade school education smoke at the highest rate (43%) while adults with a college education smoke at the lowest rate (5%).
- Adults living in households with income below 250% of the FPL have statistically higher smoking rates (26%) than those in households with income at or above 250% FPL (8%).
- Adults with private health insurance smoke at a significantly lower rate (10%) than those with any other insurance type.
- Vermonters living in rural areas smoke at a statistically higher rate than those living in urban areas (18% vs. 13%).
- Adults who rent their home smoke at a significantly higher rate than adults who own their home (31% vs. 12%).
- Adults with any disability smoke at twice the rate for those without a disability (28% vs. 13%).
- Adults who use cannabis smoke at over twice the rate of adults who do not use cannabis (28% vs. 12%).
- Adults who binge drink smoke at a significantly higher rate than those who do not binge drink (25% vs. 14%).
- Adults who use e-cigarettes smoke cigarettes at nearly triple the rate of adults who do not use e-cigarettes (42% vs. 15%).
- There are no statistical differences in smoking rates by sex, race and ethnicity, sexual orientation and gender identity or veteran status.

The rate of quit attempts varies with educational attainment; Vermonters completing some college (62%) or a college degree (54%) tried to quit smoking at a statistically higher rate than those with a high school education (36%). Quit attempt data is shown on page 5.

- Quit attempts do not differ by any other demographics.
- Rate of quit attempts are similar among those who do and do not use e-cigarettes, suggesting e-cigarettes are not being used as an aid to stop smoking.

## Adult Cigarette Smoking Prevalence†, 2021 VT BRFS



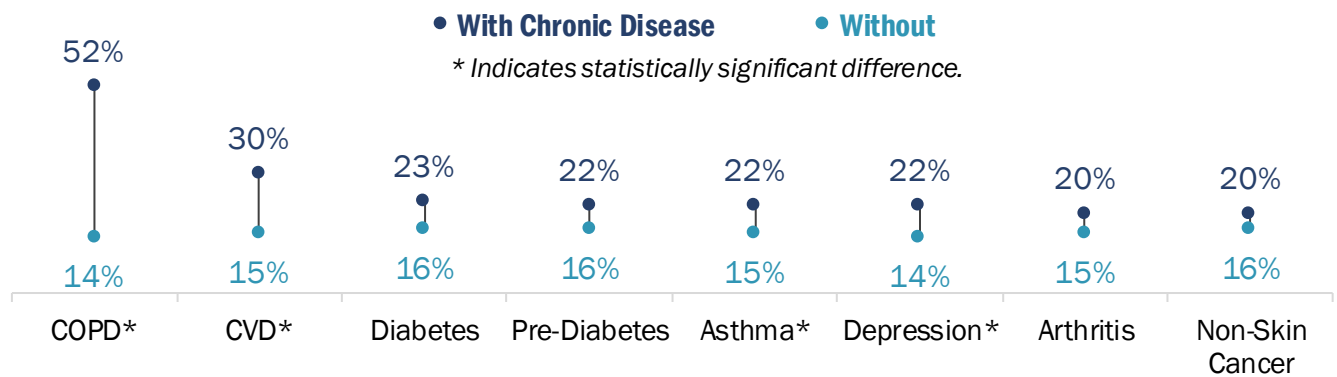
Sex = sex assigned at birth; WnH=White, non-Hispanic; BIPOC=Black, Indigenous, or people of color; LGBTQ+=Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and other sexual orientations; FPL=Federal Poverty Level; Urban=those living in Chittenden, Grand Isle and Franklin counties; Renting Home includes those with other accommodations; Cannabis Use is in past 30 days; Binge drinking is defined as having 5 or more drinks in one sitting for a male or a 4 or more drinks in one sitting for a female in the past 30 days. \*\*\*Value has been suppressed due to small sample size.

## CHRONIC CONDITIONS AND HEALTH STATUS

In 2021, adults with certain chronic diseases smoke at higher rates than those without these chronic conditions.

- Adults with Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) are four times more likely to currently smoke than those without COPD (52% vs. 14%).
- Those with Cardiovascular Disease (CVD), asthma and depression are nearly twice as likely to smoke than those without these conditions (30% vs. 15%; 22% vs. 15%; 22% vs. 14%, respectively).
- Smoking does not statistically differ by pre-diabetes, diabetes, arthritis and non-skin cancer.

### Smoking Prevalence† in Adults with Chronic Health Conditions, 2021 VT BRFSS

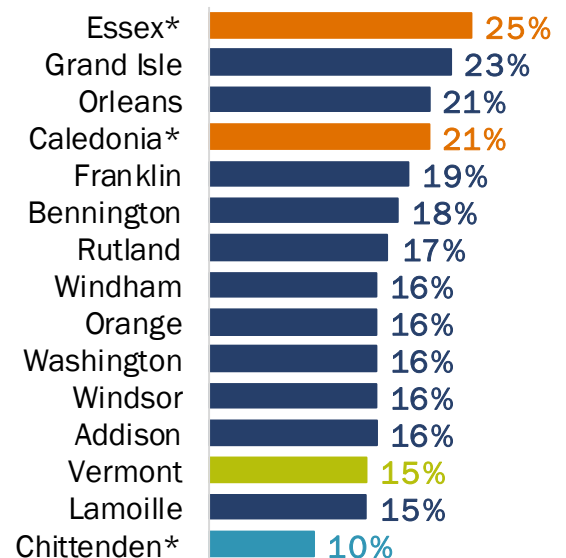


Adults who currently smoke are twice as likely to report fair to poor general health (23% vs. 11%), poor physical health (18% vs. 8%), or poor mental health (26% vs. 14%) compared to adults who do not smoke. All differences are statistically significant.

## SMOKING PREVALENCE BY COUNTY

Adult cigarette smoking prevalence ranges from 10% in Chittenden County to 25% in Essex County. The smoking rate in Chittenden County (10%) is **significantly lower** than the 2020-2021 state average while Essex County (25%) and Caledonia County (21%) have **statistically higher** rates than the **VT rate**.

### Smoking Prevalence† by County, VT BRFSS, 2020-2021



All rates are the average for 2020-2021.

\* Indicates statistically significant difference.

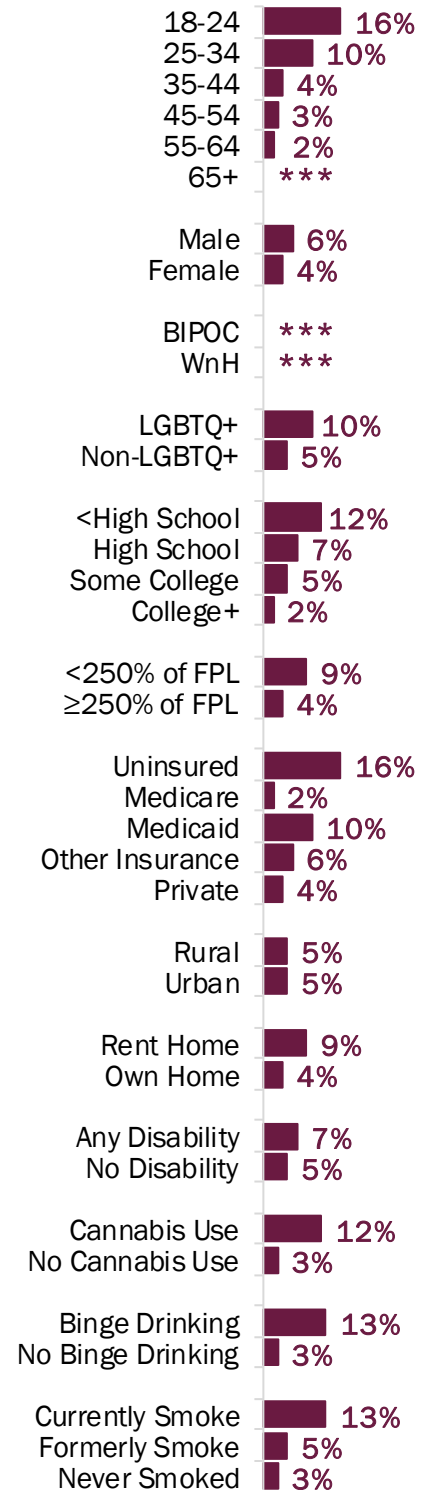
## E-CIGARETTE USE - DEMOGRAPHICS

In the BRFSS survey, adults are asked if they have ever used e-cigarettes and if so, whether they currently use them some days or every day. The question focuses on consumption of e-vapor products with nicotine, not cannabis.

Use of e-cigarettes among Vermont adults differs significantly by age, sexual orientation and gender identity, education, income, home ownership, cannabis use, binge drinking and smoking status.

- E-cigarette use declines with increasing age. Use is significantly higher in adults ages 18-24 (16%) and 25-34 (10%) compared to adults 45-54 (3%) and 55-64 years (2%).
- LGBTQ+ Vermonters use e-cigarettes at twice the rate of non-LGBTQ+ Vermonters (10% vs. 5%).
- Adults with a grade school education (12%) or a high school education (7%) use e-cigarettes at over three times the rate of those with a college education (2%).
- Adults living in households with income below 250% of the FPL use e-cigarettes at twice the rate of those living at or above 250% of the FPL (9% vs. 4%).
- Uninsured adults (16%) and those insured by Medicaid (10%) use e-cigarettes at a statistically higher rate than those insured by Medicare (2%) or a private source (4%).
- Adults who rent their home use e-cigarettes at twice the rate of those who own their home (9% vs. 4%).
- Adults who use cannabis use e-cigarettes at four times the rate of those who do not use cannabis (12% vs. 3%).
- Adults who binge drink use e-cigarettes at four times the rate of those who do not binge drink (13% vs. 3%).
- Adults who *currently* smoke cigarettes use e-cigarettes at nearly three times the rate (13%) of those who *formerly* smoked (5%) and four times the rate of those who *never* smoked (3%).
- There are no statistical differences in e-cigarette use by sex, geography or disability status while it is not reportable by race and ethnicity due to small sample size.

### Adult E-Cigarette Prevalence, 2021 VT BRFSS



Sex = sex assigned at birth. WnH=White, non-Hispanic; BIPOC=Black, Indigenous, or people of color; LGBTQ+=Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and other sexual orientations; FPL=Federal Poverty Level; Urban=those living in Chittenden, Grand Isle and Franklin counties; Renting Home includes those with other accommodations; Cannabis Use is in past 30 days; Binge drinking is defined as having 5 or more drinks in one sitting for a male or a 4 or more drinks in one sitting for a female in the past 30 days. \*\*\*Value has been suppressed due to small sample size.

## Adult Smoking Prevalence and Quit Attempts by Demographic Characteristics (VT BRFSS, 2021)

	Smoking Prevalence †			Quit Attempts †		
	%	Estimated Vermonters‡	Diff from State Rate?	%	Estimated Vermonters‡	Diff from State Rate?
<b>Overall</b>	16.1	73,300		46.7	32,700	
<b>Age Group</b>						
18-24 years	7.1 <sup>A</sup>	4,600	✓	58.1 <sup>A</sup>	2,600	
25-34 years	25.1 <sup>D</sup>	17,900	✓	37.9 <sup>A</sup>	6,700	
35-44 years	19.6 <sup>CD</sup>	13,700		49.7 <sup>A</sup>	6,600	
45-54 years	16.6 <sup>C</sup>	11,100		54.5 <sup>A</sup>	6,000	
55-64 years	15.5 <sup>BC</sup>	14,000		46.0 <sup>A</sup>	6,300	
65-74 years	10.6 <sup>AB</sup>	8,100	✓	47.5 <sup>A</sup>	3,700	
75+ years	6.7 <sup>A</sup>	3,300	✓	–	–	
<b>Sex</b>						
Male	18.0 <sup>A</sup>	39,700		44.9 <sup>A</sup>	17,000	
Female	14.2 <sup>A</sup>	33,500		49.1 <sup>A</sup>	15,700	
<b>Race-Ethnicity</b>						
White, non-Hispanic	15.9 <sup>A</sup>	65,500		46.3 <sup>A</sup>	29,200	
BIPOC	18.5 <sup>A</sup>	5,700		52.6 <sup>A</sup>	2,300	
<b>SOGI*</b>						
LGBTQ+	16.2 <sup>A</sup>	7,800		57.1 <sup>A</sup>	4,400	
Heterosexual/Cisgender	16.2 <sup>A</sup>	62,800		45.9 <sup>A</sup>	27,800	
<b>Education</b>						
Less than high school	43.3 <sup>A</sup>	12,800	✓	48.6 <sup>AB</sup>	5,200	
High school	25.2 <sup>B</sup>	31,300	✓	36.4 <sup>A</sup>	11,200	
Some college	16.6 <sup>C</sup>	20,500		61.9 <sup>B</sup>	12,200	✓
College or higher	5.1 <sup>D</sup>	8,500	✓	54.5 <sup>B</sup>	4,000	
<b>Federal Poverty Level</b>						
<250% of FPL	25.8 <sup>A</sup>	29,400	✓	54.5 <sup>A</sup>	14,500	
≥250% of FPL	8.4 <sup>B</sup>	15,900	✓	47.7 <sup>A</sup>	7,900	
<b>Insurance Status</b>						
Uninsured	35.7 <sup>A</sup>	6,600	✓	41.6 <sup>A</sup>	3,200	
Medicare	31.8 <sup>A</sup>	15,700	✓	38.5 <sup>A</sup>	6,300	
Medicaid	28.2 <sup>A</sup>	12,900	✓	51.5 <sup>A</sup>	6,000	
Other insurance	22.8 <sup>A</sup>	9,400		48.4 <sup>A</sup>	4,400	
Private	10.1 <sup>B</sup>	24,000	✓	43.6 <sup>A</sup>	11,000	
<b>Geographic Status</b>						
Rural	17.6 <sup>A</sup>	50,300		43.6 <sup>A</sup>	20,900	
Urban	13.2 <sup>B</sup>	20,800		56.0 <sup>A</sup>	10,700	
<b>Housing Status</b>						
Rent home	30.5 <sup>A</sup>	31,800	✓	50.2 <sup>A</sup>	14,800	
Own home	12.5 <sup>B</sup>	41,400	✓	42.7 <sup>A</sup>	17,800	
<b>Disability Status</b>						
Any disability	28.0 <sup>A</sup>	29,100	✓	41.8 <sup>A</sup>	11,400	
No disability	12.8 <sup>B</sup>	43,700	✓	50.0 <sup>A</sup>	21,100	
<b>Veteran Status</b>						
Veteran	15.8 <sup>A</sup>	6,200		37.2 <sup>A</sup>	2,400	
Non-veteran	16.1 <sup>A</sup>	66,800		47.0 <sup>A</sup>	30,100	
<b>Cannabis Use</b>						
Cannabis	27.9 <sup>A</sup>	27,200	✓	48.4 <sup>A</sup>	11,800	
No cannabis	11.6 <sup>B</sup>	36,900	✓	47.6 <sup>A</sup>	16,600	
<b>Binge Drinking</b>						
Binge drink	24.8 <sup>A</sup>	20,500	✓	50.6 <sup>A</sup>	10,300	
No binge drink	13.7 <sup>B</sup>	49,600		43.9 <sup>A</sup>	21,200	
<b>E-cigarette Use</b>						
E-Cigarettes	42.5 <sup>A</sup>	9,200	✓	48.6 <sup>A</sup>	4,200	
No e-cigarettes	14.7 <sup>B</sup>	63,900		48.2 <sup>A</sup>	28,400	

<sup>A, B, C, D</sup> Groups within demographic categories that share a common letter are statistically similar to each other. For example, smoking among adults who own their home and rent their home is significantly different, while quit attempts is similar.

\*SOGI = Sexual Orientation/Gender Identity; -- Indicates data has been suppressed due to small numbers.

‡The estimated number of Vermonters is rounded to the nearest hundred.

## Adult E-Cigarette Prevalence by Demographics (VT BRFSS, 2021)

	%	Estimated Vermonters <sup>‡</sup>	Diff from State Rate?		%	Estimated Vermonters <sup>‡</sup>	Diff from State Rate?
<b>Overall</b>	5.0	24,900		<b>Geographic Status</b>			
<b>Age Group</b>				Rural	4.9 <sup>A</sup>	15,100	
18-24 years	16.1 <sup>A</sup>	10,300	✓	Urban	4.8 <sup>A</sup>	8,200	
25-34 years	9.7 <sup>AB</sup>	6,900	✓	<b>Housing Status</b>			
35-44 years	4.5 <sup>BC</sup>	3,100		Rent home	9.0 <sup>A</sup>	11,500	✓
45-54 years	2.7 <sup>C</sup>	1,800	✓	Own home	3.6 <sup>B</sup>	13,100	
55-64 years	1.8 <sup>C</sup>	1,600	✓	<b>Disability Status</b>			
65+ years	–	–		Any disability	6.6 <sup>A</sup>	8,100	
<b>Sex</b>				No disability	4.5 <sup>A</sup>	16,600	
Male	6.2 <sup>A</sup>	15,000		<b>Cannabis Use</b>			
Female	3.9 <sup>A</sup>	9,800		Cannabis	12.1 <sup>A</sup>	11,800	✓
<b>SOGI<sup>‡</sup></b>				No cannabis	2.9 <sup>B</sup>	10,000	✓
LGBTQ+	10.5 <sup>A</sup>	5,200	✓	<b>Binge Drinking</b>			
Heterosexual/Cisgender	4.5 <sup>B</sup>	19,100		Binge drink	13.0 <sup>A</sup>	10,600	✓
<b>Education</b>				No binge drink	3.4 <sup>B</sup>	13,700	
<High school	12.2 <sup>A</sup>	4,000		<b>Cigarette Smoking</b>			
High School	7.1 <sup>A</sup>	10,000		Currently smoke	12.6 <sup>A</sup>	9,200	✓
Some college	4.7 <sup>AB</sup>	6,700		Formerly smoked	5.4 <sup>B</sup>	7,400	
College or higher	2.3 <sup>B</sup>	4,100	✓	Never smoked	2.9 <sup>B</sup>	8,200	✓
<b>Federal Poverty Level</b>							
<25% of FPL	9.2 <sup>A</sup>	10,500	✓				
≥25% of FPL	3.9 <sup>B</sup>	7,300					
<b>Insurance Status</b>							
Uninsured	15.8 <sup>A</sup>	3,400	✓				
Medicare	2.1 <sup>B</sup>	2,600	✓				
Medicaid	9.7 <sup>A</sup>	4,300					
Other insurance	6.3 <sup>AB</sup>	2,700					
Private	3.6 <sup>B</sup>	8,700					

A, B, C, D Groups within demographic categories that share a common letter are statistically similar to each other. For example, e-cigarette use among Vermonters who do or do not use cannabis is significantly different while use among male and female Vermonters is not.

<sup>‡</sup>SOGI = Sexual Orientation/Gender Identity.

– Indicates data has been suppressed due to small numbers.

<sup>‡</sup>The estimated number of Vermonters is rounded to the nearest hundred.

### DATA NOTES

Smoking prevalence and quit attempt data are age adjusted to the standard U.S. 2000 adult population according to Healthy People guidelines; e-cigarette use and estimated counts are not age adjusted with counts being rounded to the nearest hundred adults.

The BRFSS uses the term “marijuana” to refer to cannabis. We have used “cannabis” in this data brief to reflect updated terminology at the Vermont Department of Health.

### REFERENCES

<sup>1</sup> Extinguishing the Tobacco Epidemic in Vermont: <https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/stateandcommunity/state-fact-sheets/vermont/index.html>

<sup>2</sup> Vermont State Health Improvement Plan 2019-2023: [https://www.healthvermont.gov/sites/default/files/documents/pdf/ADM\\_State\\_Health\\_Improvement\\_Plan\\_2019-2023.pdf](https://www.healthvermont.gov/sites/default/files/documents/pdf/ADM_State_Health_Improvement_Plan_2019-2023.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> Vermont Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS): [www.healthvermont.gov/brfss](http://www.healthvermont.gov/brfss)

### FOR MORE INFORMATION

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#### Vermont Tobacco Data

[www.healthvermont.gov/health-statistics-vital-records/surveillance-reporting-topic/tobacco](http://www.healthvermont.gov/health-statistics-vital-records/surveillance-reporting-topic/tobacco)

#### Vermont Tobacco Control Program

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