

Population Health: Smoking

This metadata page provides a brief summary of this dataset. More detailed data and [metadata](#) are available from the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS). Please also refer to the contact information on the last page under 'Questions?'

About the Measure

Adult Smoking in this dataset is considered the percentage of the adult population in a parish (county) who both report that they currently smoke every day or some days and have smoked at least 100 cigarettes in their lifetime ([County Health Rankings metadata, 2023](#)). The health measure is displayed as the percentage of adults who are current smokers (age-adjusted) averaged over five years by Louisiana Parish.

The US CDC [Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System \(BRFSS\)](#) survey includes the non-institutionalized population over 18 years of age. The BRFSS survey is a health-related telephone survey that collects state data about U.S. residents regarding their health-related risk behaviors, chronic health conditions, and use of preventive services. Different questions may be included in the survey by state or by year, and the methods of estimating each measure may change.

Data Sources

- [County Health Rankings & Roadmaps: Adult Smoking](#)
- [CDC Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System \(BRFSS\)—Prevalence Trends and Data](#)

The Louisiana Department of Health (LDH) Environmental Public Health Tracking Program downloads these data from the County Health Rankings & Roadmaps as sample data so that it can be viewed with other Health and Environmental datasets on the Health Data Explorer. The data were included in partnership and as part of ongoing projects with [Smoking Cessation](#) and [Louisiana Birth Defects Monitoring Network](#).

Vintage: The dataset available from LDH Tracking:

- Percent of adults who are current smokers (age-adjusted) averaged over five years by Louisiana Parish, **2015-2019**.

Explore Data

The LDH Health Data Explorer (<http://ldh.la.gov/tracking>) is an online query tool which allows health, environmental hazard, exposure and population data to be explored and viewed side-by-side in tables, charts, and maps. These data can be viewed, printed and downloaded for further analysis.

To Explore Data on the query tool:

Select Criteria:

Category: **Population Health**

Topic: **Health Behaviors**

Focus: **Health Factors**

Indicator: **Adult Smoking**

Smoking and your Health

Smoking tobacco in cigarettes or other forms is considered a major known risk factor for many diseases. Smoking is often considered the primary or leading cause for diseases such as lung cancer. The associations aren't always clear for diseases such as birth defects or other cancers. Environmental health scientists cannot exclude or ignore the possible contributions of adult smoking, nor associations with other health conditions such as upper respiratory conditions which are made worse by smoking, when looking for associations between the environment and disease.

Smoking and the Environment

LDH Tracking has included adult smoking as a population health measure in the Health Data Portal because smoking is one of the causes of lung diseases and Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD), which includes emphysema and chronic bronchitis. Smoking also increases risk for a wide range of other diseases. Scientists cannot exclude this risk factor when studying the associations between air quality and community disease whether immune diseases, birth defects or cancer.

When studying environmental associations and effects on health, major risk factors such as smoking must be considered and accounted for at a minimum, as "confounding variables." When investigating any potential cause-and-effect, a confounding variable is an unmeasured third variable that may be influencing the effect as another possible cause. To the extent possible, environmental health scientists must account for, or attempt to "rule out" unknowns that may or may not be contributing significantly to disease. These include smoking, poverty, nutrition, other underlying health conditions, access to health care, medications, indoor environments, and other risk factors. Without considering or acknowledging other risk factors potentially contributing to disease, a study design will be flawed. To explore the associations between the environment and health, it must be shown or proposed how individuals or communities are exposed to a pollutant, whether directly or indirectly, through inhalation, skin contact or other means.

Data Methods, Limitations and Important Considerations

Data represent 5-year averages for each parish.

Diseases such as cancer often have a latency period. This results in a delay between the time of exposure and the onset of disease. The smoking data cannot be correlated with some diseases which have a longer latency of disease.

Please refer to additional [metadata](#) from the data steward for more information. Please also read more on the [CDC BRFSS](#).

Data Re-release

This is a public dataset which can be freely shared with citation.

Data Citations

Data Source: County Health Rankings & Roadmaps, 2023.

Please cite the US CDC and LDH Environmental Public Health Tracking Program Cooperative Agreement NUE1EH001490, and of the data source(s) used which are listed on Page 1, when applying or sharing these data in analyses and publications.

Disclaimer

Data are intended to spur further research and should be used only as a starting point to understanding how the environment and other contributing factors may be connected to disease. Datasets presented on the LDH Health Data Explorer site are intended to answer some basic questions, but should ultimately lead to further inquiry and more detailed study.

Data limitations should be noted when conducting exploratory ecological studies with these data. Limitations may include data gaps, reporting discrepancies (for example, a disruption of reporting or instrument recording) and insufficient data are all potentially confounding factors. There are numerous additional factors which may contribute to disease onset. These include genetics, access to health care, existing health conditions, medicines, other chemical substances we come into contact with or ingest, nutrition, route and duration of exposure, level of activity, level of stress, and others.

Responsible use of these data requires exercising caution when drawing conclusions based solely on views of the limited available data. Any perceived relationship, trend, or pattern apparent in the data should not be interpreted to imply causation; may in fact be unrelated; and should be regarded as preliminary, and potentially erroneous, until more in-depth study and if applicable, statistical evaluation, can be applied.

The LDH Bureau of Health Informatics and Environmental Public Health Tracking Program cannot guarantee the completeness of the information contained in these datasets and expressly disclaim liability for errors and omissions in their content.

Additional Information

Please visit the following links for more information on Adult Smoking:

- Louisiana Department of Health | [Well-Ahead Tobacco Cessation and Prevention](#)
- US CDC [Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System \(BRFSS\)](#)
- [County Health Rankings & Roadmaps: Adult Smoking](#)

Questions?

Email: healthdata@la.gov

Website: <http://ldh.la.gov/tracking>

Toll free Phone: 1-888-293-7020