

American Indians in California: Cancer and Tobacco Use



American Indians and Cancer Facts

- Commercial tobacco use is a risk factor for breast, lung, kidney, and bladder cancer, among others¹ (Figure 1)².
- The leading causes of death among American Indians (AI) are cardiovascular and lung diseases³.

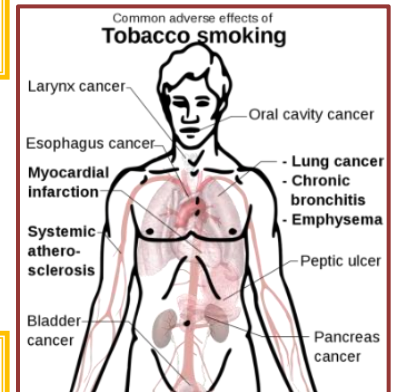


Figure 1.

Tobacco Use and Healthcare Costs

- In 2010, 17% of AI adolescents between 12 and 17 years old reported smoking in the past month compared to the national average of 10%⁴.
- California data has also shown a high prevalence of tobacco use among AI adolescents compared with other groups (Unger et al, 2000)⁶.
- Nearly \$800 million are spent on health care and lost productivity among the AI community⁵.
- 50% of AI women living in rural areas who are current smokers reported smoking during pregnancy⁷; increasing their risk of pregnancy complications, premature delivery, and low birth weight infants⁸.

Why should tribes prioritize tobacco education and prevention?

- We can save lives and protect our kids with tribal and community policies⁹.
- Policies can prevent and reduce initial tobacco use among youth¹⁰.
- Policies can also reduce secondhand smoke exposure at work and in the home.
- More culturally specific prevention and cessation programs are needed.
- Tobacco has a spiritual role among many AI tribes and has for many generations.

1, 3. ACS, CDPH, CCR. California Cancer Facts and Figures 2012. Oakland, CA: ACS, CA Division, September 2011. 2. Figure 8-6. Chapter 8 in: Mitchell et al. *Robbins Basic Pathology*. Phil.: Saunders. 8th ed. 4. SAMHSA, CBSHQ. (October 4, 2011.) *The NSDUH Report: Substance Use among AI or AN Adolescent*. Rockville, MD. 5,9-10. *Costs of Smoking and Secondhand Smoke Exposure in CA AI Communities*. UCLA Center for Health Policy Research. (2010). 6. Unger, et al (2000). Ethnic differences in adolescent smoking prevalence in CA: are multi-ethnic youth at higher risk? *Tob Control*, 9(ii9). 7. Hodge, F., and Nandy, K. (2011). Factors Associated with AI Cigarette Smoking in Rural Settings. *Int J Envir Res Pub Health*, 8(4). 8. U.S. DHHS, HRSA, Maternal and Child Health Bureau. Women's Health USA 2010. Rockville, MD: U.S. DHHS, 2010.

If you should have any questions or are interested in learning more, please feel free to contact:

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