



## Tobacco Use in LGBT Communities

Nearly

**ONE IN THREE**

lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) adults smoke, a rate that is more than 50% higher than other adults<sup>(1)</sup>

- ✓ Smoking results in significant health disparities and kills 30,000+ LGBT people per year.<sup>(2)</sup>
- ✓ Transgender smoking rates have been reported as high as 83%.<sup>(3)</sup> Transgender people who have experienced structural discrimination have 65% higher odds of being a current smoker.<sup>(4)</sup>
- ✓ Bisexual women have 2.6 times higher odds of smoking compared to heterosexual women.<sup>(5)</sup>
- ✓ LGB high school students use tobacco products at a rate of 40.5%, including 19.2% who smoke, which is twice the rate of other students. Transgender youth smoke at a rate of 31%. Read our youth fact sheet at [lgbthealthlink.org/fact-sheets](http://lgbthealthlink.org/fact-sheets).

**Other tobacco products** are also disproportionately used by LGBT people

- ✓ 9.4% of LGBT adults are active e-cigarette users, which is almost double the rate of non-LGBT adults, and a full quarter of LGBT people had tried e-cigarettes as of 2013.<sup>(11)</sup>
- ✓ LGB adults use cigars, cigarillos, pipes, and hookah at 1.5 to 3 times the rate of others.<sup>(12)</sup>

## Different groups within the diverse LGBT population have different risks

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- ✓ **LGBT African Americans** are twice as likely as white LGB adults to attempt quitting smoking, but have a third as many former smokers.<sup>(13)</sup> Black LGB youth smoke cigars and clove cigarettes 66% more than white LGB youth and 225% more than black heterosexual youth.<sup>(14)</sup>
- ✓ **LGB Hispanic youth** are twice as likely to smoke cigarettes and 60% more likely to smoke hookah than heterosexual Hispanics.<sup>(14)</sup>
- ✓ **American Indians & Alaska Natives** smoke more than any other group at 39%. At the same time, 45.8% of LGB Alaskan Natives smoke,<sup>(15)</sup> and LGB American Indians likely smoke at an elevated rate as well.
- ✓ **Rural LGBT people** smoke at least as much as urban LGBT people and may not feel comfortable coming out to their providers or be able to access LGBT-inclusive cessation programs.<sup>(17-19)</sup>
- ✓ **Low-income LGBT people** and those without a college degree are more likely to be smokers.<sup>(20)</sup>
- ✓ **People living with HIV**, who are disproportionately LGBT, smoke at two to three times the rate of others,<sup>(21)</sup> lose more years of life from smoking than from HIV,<sup>(22)</sup> and face compounded health risks.<sup>(21)</sup>

## LGBT people can quit with proper support and interventions

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- ✓ LGB adults have the same desire to quit and, with the exception of bi women, have the same number of quit attempts as other smokers.<sup>(23)</sup> However, LGB smokers who wanted to quit were five times less likely than others to intend to call a quitline.<sup>(25)</sup>
- ✓ Additionally, only 23% of LGBT folks use nicotine replacement therapy,<sup>(24)</sup> a cessation aid that is a recommended best practice and is often covered by insurance.<sup>(26)</sup>
- ✓ LGBT folks benefit from LGBT-specific cessation groups, programs, and messaging.<sup>(6)</sup>
- ✓ LGBT people are 1.8 times as likely to prepare to quit if they are comfortable asking their doctor for help.<sup>(27)</sup> Health care professionals should create a welcoming and tobacco-free clinical environment, reach out to LGBT smokers, and connect them to services.<sup>(18-30)</sup>

References for this document can be found at:  
<http://hlthink.lgbt/fact-sheets>

LGBT HealthLink, a program of CenterLink, is a community-driven network of experts and professionals enhancing LGBT health by reducing tobacco-, cancer-, and other health-disparities within our communities. We are one of eight CDC-funded cancer & tobacco disparity networks. We link people & information to promote adoption of best practices in health departments & community organization to reduce LGBT cancer & tobacco disparities.

