Regional data is available in this report

Around 1.8m fewer adult smokers in England in 2018 compared with seven years ago

The number of adult cigarette smokers\(^1\) in England has dropped by around 1.8m from 7.7m\(^2\) (19.8%) in 2011\(^3\) to 5.9m (14.4%) in 2018, new official figures show.

The Statistics on Smoking, England: 2019 report is a compendium published by NHS Digital, which also includes data from Public Health England and the Office for National Statistics\(^4\).

The prevalence of adult smokers throughout the UK was 14.7%. Of the constituent countries, England had the lowest (14.4%). Prevalence was highest in Scotland (16.3%), followed by Wales (15.9%) and then Northern Ireland (15.5%)\(^5\).

Statistics on Smoking, England: 2019 also includes figures on prevalence of smoking by age, prescriptions data, E-cigarette prevalence, hospital admissions and mortality attributable to smoking, and selected local level analyses.

**Prevalence by age**

In 2018, adults aged 25 to 34 were most likely to smoke (19%), whilst those aged 65 and over were least likely to smoke (8%)\(^6\).

In 2016, 6% of school pupils aged between 11 and 15 reported they were current smokers in 2016, down from 22% in 1996\(^7\).

**Smoking during pregnancy**\(^8\)
Just under 11% of pregnant women were known to be smokers at the time of delivery in 2018-19. This is similar than the level recorded in 2017-18, but down from 15% in 2008/09.

The report also shows that:

**E-cigarette prevalence**

E-cigarette usage continues to rise, with 6.3% of adults being current users in 2018. This is compared to 5.5% in 2017 and 3.7% in 2014.

Adults aged 35 to 49 were most likely to use e-cigarettes (8.1%), while adults aged 60 and over were least likely (4.1%).

The most common reason for adults using e-cigarettes was as an aid to quit smoking (51.5%).

A quarter of pupils (25%) reported ever having tried e-cigarettes in 2016, an increase from 22% in 2014.

**Smoking related ill-health and mortality**

There were 489,300 estimated hospital admissions attributable to smoking in 2017-18, an increase of 1% on 2016-17 (484,700) and an increase of 11% on 2007-08 (440,400). For males, this accounted for 6% of all hospital admissions and for 3% of all admissions for females.

Local authorities in Blackpool and Sunderland recorded the highest rates of hospital admissions attributable to smoking - above 2,900 per 100,000 population - while Wokingham had the lowest rate (721 per 100,000 population), followed by Rutland (877), Isle of Wight (877) and Redbridge (913).

There were an estimated 77,800 deaths attributable to smoking in 2017, which is similar to 2016 (77,900) and a decrease of 6% per cent from 2007 (82,400). For males, this accounted for 20% of all deaths, and 12% of all deaths for females.
Prescription items\textsuperscript{16}

The number of items\textsuperscript{17} dispensed as an aid to stop smoking in England was 740,000 in 2018-19, compared to 2.26 million 10 years ago and a peak of 2.56 million in 2010/11.

NHS Bradford City CCG had the highest rate of items dispensed in 2018-19 at 40 per 1,000 population, whilst NHS Wyre Forest, NHS South Worcestershire and NHS Redditch and Bromsgrove all recorded rates of less than one item per 1,000 population.

Second-hand smoke\textsuperscript{18}

Data on self-reported exposure to second-hand smoke shows 28% of men and 24% of women said they had at least some exposure.

This was highest among those aged 16 to 24, with half of this group reporting at least some exposure.

Other information in this report includes use of NHS Stop Smoking services, young people’s attitudes to smoking and household expenditure on tobacco.

ENDS

Read the full report

Notes to editors

1. The term ‘smokers’ covers those who smoke tobacco cigarettes.
2. Figures are rounded to be consistent with the source publication.
3. 2011 was the first year that data was fully completed in the Annual Population Survey.
4. The Office for National Statistics (ONS) is the UK’s largest independent producer of official statistics and the recognised national statistical institute of the UK.
5. These figures refer to the number of adults that currently smoke. Current smokers are defined as those who answered “Yes” to “Have you ever smoked cigarettes regularly?” and “Do you smoke cigarettes at all nowadays?”. 
6. Figures sourced from the ONS: *Adult smoking habits, Annual Population Survey, 2018*
7. Figures sourced from NHS Digital’s *Smoking, drinking and drug use among young people, 2016*
8. Figures sourced from NHS Digital’s *Smoking Status at Time of Delivery 2018/19*
9. Figures sourced from the ONS: *Adult smoking habits, Annual Population Survey, 2018*
10. Figures sourced from NHS Digital’s *Smoking, drinking and drug use among young people, 2016*
11. The estimates of the proportion of hospital admissions and deaths attributable to smoking are calculated following a recognised methodology. This uses the proportions of current and ex-smokers in the population and the relative risks of these people dying from specific diseases or developing certain non-fatal conditions compared with those who have never smoked. See Appendix B for further details. Figures presented relate to people aged 35 and over, as relative risks are only available for this age group.
12. Figures sourced from NHS Digital’s *Hospital Episode Statistics*
13. Figures sourced from Public Health England’s *Local Tobacco Control Profiles*
14. Figures sourced from NHS Digital’s *Hospital Episode Statistics*
15. Figures sourced from the ONS: *Adult smoking habits, Annual Population Survey, 2018*
16. Figures sourced from NHS Prescription Service’s Prescription Analysis and Cost (PACT) data
17. Prescriptions are written on a prescription form known as a FP10. Each single item written on the form is counted as a prescription item.
18. Figures sourced from *Health Survey for England 2017."

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