



Burden of Tobacco/Nicotine Use in Rhode Island

Tobacco use remains the leading preventable cause of death and disease in the United States and in Rhode Island. Approximately 490,000 deaths each year are attributed to smoking and other tobacco use in the United States, with 1,800 deaths in Rhode Island annually and 31.3% of cancer related deaths attributable to smoking.¹ Tobacco-related disparities negatively impact health equity.² No tobacco products, including e-cigarettes, are safe.³

An estimated 1,300 youth in Rhode Island will try smoking cigarettes for the first time this year.¹ Nearly 9 out of 10 (90%) adults who currently smoke cigarettes started using tobacco/nicotine products by age 18, and 99% started by age 26.⁴ Flavored e-cigarettes are the most used tobacco/nicotine product among youth and young adults. In Rhode Island, 95% of high school students who use e-cigarettes use flavored products,⁵ and the most common flavors used nationwide are fruit, candy, mint, and menthol.⁶ Most e-cigarettes contain nicotine, which is highly addictive. Nicotine can harm the parts of an adolescent's brain that control attention, learning, mood, and impulse control.⁷ Aerosol from e-cigarettes can contain harmful and potentially harmful substances.⁸ There is currently no e-cigarette approved by the FDA to help people quit smoking.⁸

Rhode Island Youth Tobacco Use Behaviors

High School, 2023 ⁵	Percent (%)
Ever tried e-cigarettes	32.4
Flavored e-cigarette use	15.6
Ever tried cigarettes	11.9
Purchased e-cigarettes from store/shop †	23.3
Obtained e-cigarettes by other means (i.e., other individuals, friends, or family) †	75.1

† among current high school e-cigarette users

Rhode Island Current Tobacco Use

High School, 2023 ⁵	Percent (%)
E-cigarettes	16.5
Daily e-cigarette use	3.9
Cigars, cigarillos, or little cigars	4.0
Cigarettes	3.1
Smokeless tobacco products	2.8
Middle School, 2023 ⁵	Percent (%)
E-cigarettes	6.7
Adults, 2023 ⁹	Percent (%)
Cigarettes	9.5
E-cigarettes	6.8
Menthol cigarettes*	38.0

*among current adult cigarette users

Rhode Island Department of Health Tobacco Control Program:

health.ri.gov/tobacco/tobacco-control-program

Reducing Tobacco/Nicotine Use Burden with Treatment:

Most people who smoke want to quit.¹⁰ Rhode Island offers free, effective, customized, and confidential help for adults and youth interested in quitting or reducing tobacco/nicotine use:

Rhode Island Nicotine Helpline

- Recommended for adults ages 18+
- Text: "Start"/"Inscribir" to 300500
- Call: 1-800-QUIT-NOW (1-800-784-8669) 1-800-8-DEJALO
- Visit: QuitNowRI.com

QuitNowRI.com



My Life, My Quit™

- Recommended for youth ages 13-17
- Text: "Start" to 36072
- Call: 855-891-9989
- Visit: mylifemyquit.com

MY LIFE MY QUIT™



Smoking-Caused Monetary Costs for Rhode Island per Year¹

\$744 million

Annual healthcare costs

\$233.0 million

Medicaid costs

\$1.1 billion

Losses in productivity

References:

- ¹ Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids. [The Toll of Tobacco in Rhode Island](#).
- ² U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. [Eliminating Tobacco-Related Disease and Death: Addressing Disparities — A Report of the Surgeon General](#).
- ³ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. [Health Effects of Vaping](#).
- ⁴ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. [The Health Consequences of Smoking — 50 Years of Progress: A Report of the Surgeon General](#).
- ⁵ Rhode Island Department of Health. Center for Health Data Analysis. [2023 Youth Risk Behavior Survey](#).
- ⁶ Park-Lee E, Jamal A, Cowan H, et al. [Notes from the Field: E-Cigarette and Nicotine Pouch Use Among Middle and High School Students — United States, 2024](#).
- ⁷ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. [E-Cigarette Use Among Youth](#).
- ⁸ U.S. Food & Drug Administration. [Want to Quit Smoking? FDA-Approved and FDA-Cleared Cessation Products Can Help](#).
- ⁹ Rhode Island Department of Health. Center for Health Data Analysis. [2023 Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System](#).
- ¹⁰ Babb S, Malarcher A, Schauer G, Asman K, Jamal A. [Quitting Smoking Among Adults—United States, 2000–2015](#).