
SMOKE FREE ONTARIO ACT as of May 31, 2006

Fact Sheet – Smoking Trends in Ontario

Ministry of Health Promotion

Le ministère de la Promotion de la santé

This fact sheet provides basic information only. It must not take the place of medical advice, diagnosis or treatment. Always talk to a health care professional about any concerns you have, and before you make any changes to your diet, lifestyle or treatment.

Nineteen percent of Ontarians aged 15 and older smoked in 2004. Daily smokers smoked an average of 15.4 cigarettes per day.

Long-term smoking trends

Within the past two decades, all age groups in Ontario have experienced a decline in smoking rates. Smoking prevalence dropped substantially during the 1980's, and while it has continued to decline within the past decade, the rate of decline has been slower.

Smoking trends, 1999-2004

Smoking prevalence by age group for 1999 to 2004*

Age	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
15+	23%	23%	20%	20%	20%	19%
15-19	25%	25%	19%	19%	14%	17%
20-24	34%	28%	31%	29%	30%	24%

*From Canadian Tobacco Use Monitoring Survey (Health Canada)

Estimates of smoking prevalence (i.e., the percentage of current smokers – daily and occasional – in the population) are based on self-report and are generally considered to be under-estimates of the true smoking prevalence.

Aged 15 and older:

Within the past six years, the percentage of population aged 15 and older in Ontario reporting themselves to be smokers decreased from 23 per cent in 1999 to 19 per cent in 2004.

Aged 15-19:

According to Health Canada, smoking prevalence for Canadian youth aged 15 to 19 years peaked in the mid- to late-90s with a high of 28 per cent. Within the past six years, the smoking prevalence in this age group has decreased. In Ontario, the smoking rate decreased from 25 per cent in 1999 to 17 per cent in 2004.

Aged 20-24:

Smoking prevalence has historically been higher among young adults aged 20 to 24 years than any other age group. This rate has declined from 34 per cent in 1999 to an all-time low of 24 per cent in 2004.