

CTUMS

CANADIAN TOBACCO USE MONITORING SURVEY

SMOKING IN CANADA: AN OVERVIEW

The Canadian Tobacco Use Monitoring Survey (CTUMS) was developed to provide Health Canada and its partners with timely, reliable, and continual data on tobacco use and related issues. The survey's primary objective is to track changes in smoking status and amount smoked, especially for 15–24-year-olds, who are most at risk for taking up smoking.

These findings are based on interviews conducted by Statistics Canada between February and December 2002. This fact sheet provides an overview of findings for 2002, including the latest trends in smoking and exposure to second-hand smoke, a comparison of progress across individual provinces, and some new data on use of “light” and “mild” cigarettes.

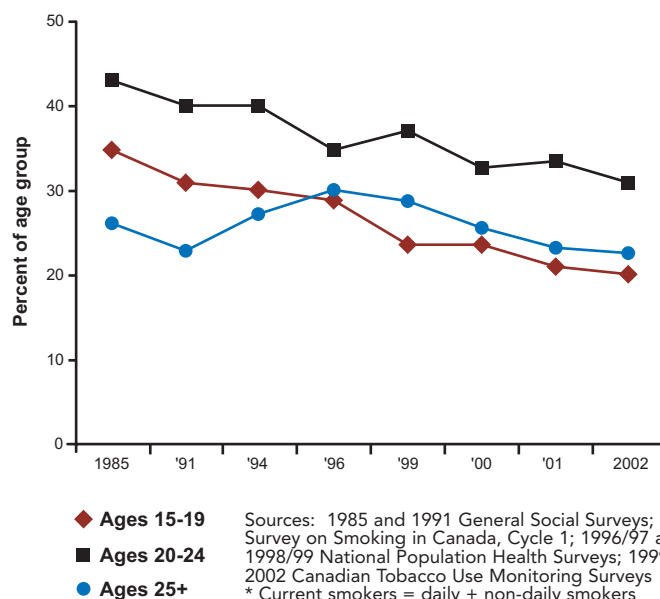
All CTUMS fact sheets and supplementary tables, representing four full years of data collection since February 1999, are available on Health Canada's Tobacco Control Programme website at www.gosmokefree.ca/ctums.

Trends in Smoking

Smoking rates continued to decline across Canada. In 2002, slightly more than one in five Canadians aged 15 and older were current smokers (21%), that is, smoked either daily or occasionally. This compares with 35% of Canadians who reported being current smokers in 1985. Since the first CTUMS in 1999, the smoking rate has declined by 15%, or 4 percentage points (from 25%).

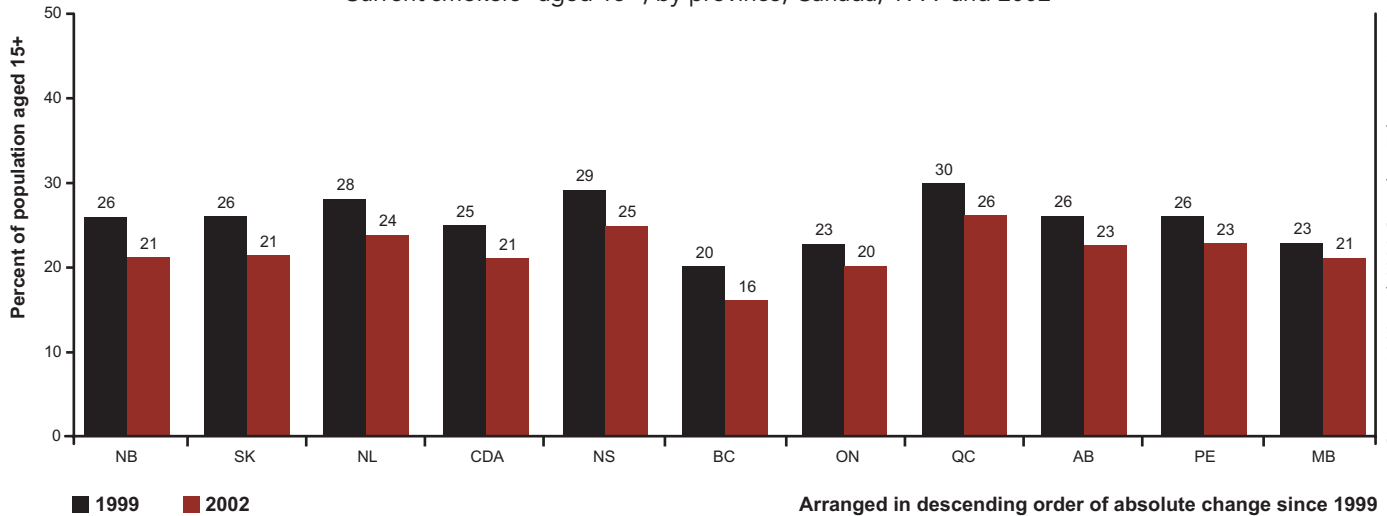
The decrease in smoking since 1985 has occurred in all age groups (Figure 1). Nevertheless, a greater percentage of young adults (aged 20–24) smoked than did youth (15–19).

FIGURE 1
Trends in smoking
Current smokers,* by age, Canada, 1985-2002



All provinces have witnessed a drop in their smoking rates since 1999, the greatest declines being noted in New Brunswick and Saskatchewan (Figure 2). The smoking rates in these two provinces were above the Canadian average of 25% in 1999, but that is no longer the case. In 2002, the lowest smoking rate among those aged 15 and older was reported in British Columbia (16%) and the highest rate was seen in Quebec (26%), with Nova Scotia (25%) following closely behind.

FIGURE 2
Provincial changes in smoking
 Current smokers* aged 15+, by province, Canada, 1999 and 2002



Sources: 1999 and 2002 Canadian Tobacco Use Monitoring Surveys
 * Current smokers = daily + non-daily smokers

“Light” and “Mild” Cigarettes

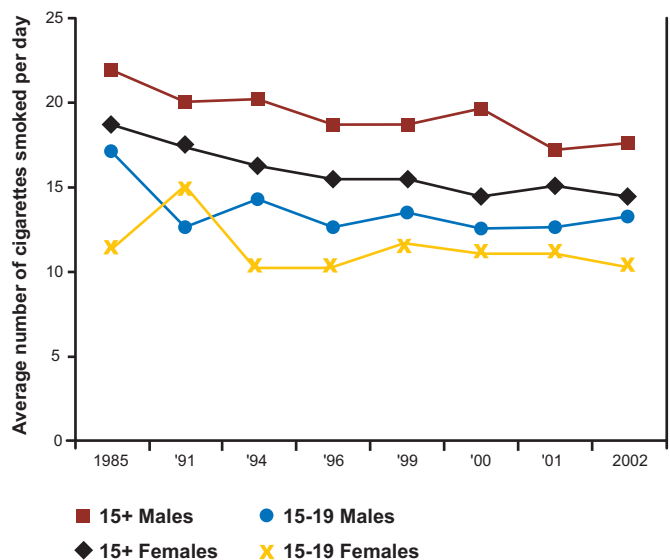
Cigarettes labelled “light” and “mild,” including “extra” and “ultra” versions, continued to enjoy wide popularity among smokers in Canada. Overall, 61% of smokers reported using such brands. These types of cigarettes were most often smoked in Ontario (73% of smokers) and least often in Quebec (45%). Women who smoked were somewhat more inclined than men to use light and mild cigarettes (66% versus 57%, respectively), but usage varied little in relation to age — with one important exception. Smokers aged 15–17 were far more likely than older smokers to choose regular strength cigarettes, and this was true of both males (53%) and females (57%). This was the only age group where a minority of smokers used the light and mild versions.

Daily Smokers

Among current smokers aged 15 and older, 82% smoked on a daily basis, accounting for 18% of all people in that age group in Canada. Daily smoking among smokers increased modestly with age, from 74% of teen smokers to 84% of smokers aged 25 and older. At the same time, the average number of cigarettes consumed by daily smokers also increased with age, from 12.9 per day among teen smokers to 14.0 per day at ages 20–24, and up to 17.1 per day among those aged 25 or older.

Overall, the average daily consumption of cigarettes by daily smokers was 16.4 cigarettes, a very slight decrease from 1999, when it was 17.0, but a more substantial decline from 1985, when it was 20.6. The drop in the average amount smoked by daily smokers of both sexes (Figure 3) has been more modest than the reduction in

FIGURE 3
Average amount smoked daily, by age and sex
 Daily smokers, Canada, 1985–2002



Sources: 1985 and 1991 General Social Surveys; 1994 Survey on Smoking in Canada, Cycle 1; 1996/97 and 1998/99 National Population Health Surveys; 1999–2002 Canadian Tobacco Use Monitoring Surveys

the prevalence of smoking. In fact, there have been recent *increases* in daily consumption by male daily smokers, especially those in their teens.

Almost half (44%) of the daily smokers versus about one third (36%) of the non-daily smokers aged 15 and older were *not even thinking* about giving up smoking. This trend held true for each of the age groups (15–19, 20–24, and 25+).

Non-smokers

Non-smokers were composed of people who had never smoked and those who formerly smoked but had successfully quit. Overall, more than half of adult Canadians (54%) were classified as never-smokers¹ in 2002, while another 25% were classified as former smokers.

Non-smokers were most likely to be found in British Columbia and Ontario (Figure 4). There were different reasons why a particular province may have had fewer smokers than others. Ontario, for example, had more than the average proportion of never-smokers, but its recent quit rate² was the lowest in Canada. New Brunswick, on the other hand, had a smaller-than-average share of never-smokers in 2002 but the highest quit rate of any province.

Helping Smokers Quit

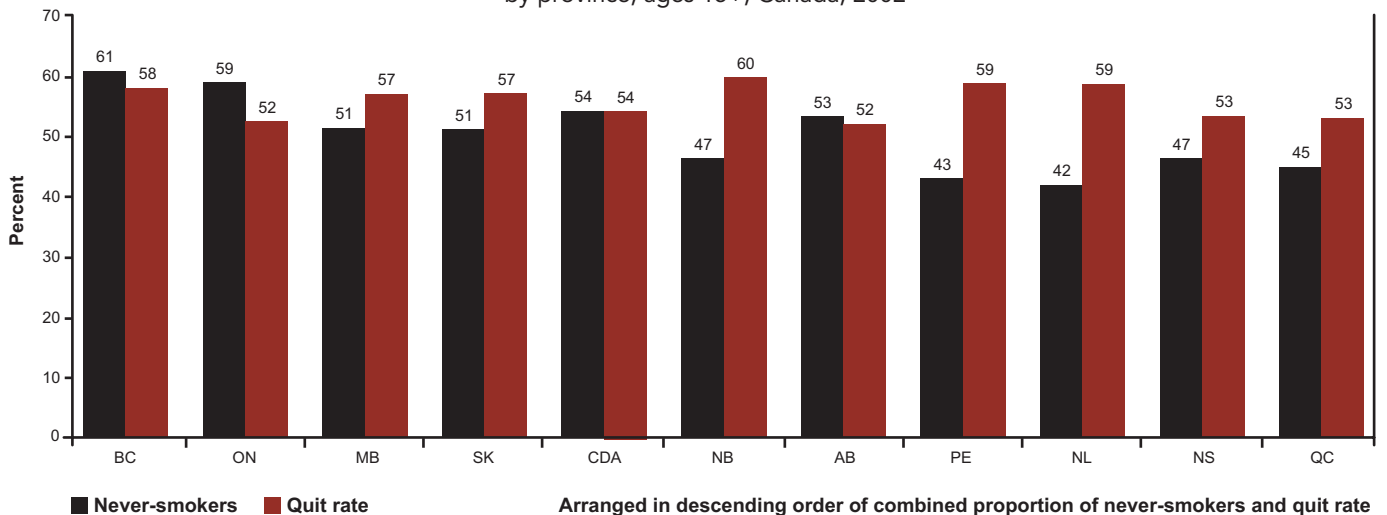
Smokers reported that health concerns were among the most common reasons for trying to quit smoking. For this reason, the 2002 CTUMS asked about the role played by doctors and dentists in this process. Almost three quarters (74%) of current smokers saw a doctor in 2002 and 57% saw a dentist. Of the former group, 49% were advised by their doctor to reduce or quit smoking, nearly twice the proportion that were so advised by their dentist (27%).

Patients who smoked were most likely to be advised by their doctor to reduce or quit smoking if they lived in Manitoba (60%) and least likely if they lived in British Columbia (37%). Dental patients had a very different experience: they most often got advice to reduce or quit smoking in British Columbia (34%) and Newfoundland (34%) and least often in Manitoba (19%).

¹ Never-smokers are defined as persons who have smoked fewer than 100 cigarettes in a lifetime. Thus this group includes some who tried smoking but never took up the habit in a steady fashion.

² The quit rate expresses the proportion of persons who have ever smoked who have quit (former smokers / former + current smokers).

FIGURE 4
Non-smokers (never-smokers and quit rate*)
by province, ages 15+, Canada, 2002



Source: 2002 Canadian Tobacco Use Monitoring Survey
* Quit rate = former smokers / former + current smokers

By far the most common approach used to quit smoking, as reported by former smokers, was “cold turkey” (74% of the answers given). Other methods reported included nicotine gum and the patch (6% and 3% of answers, respectively).

Second-hand Smoke at Home

In 2002, fewer than one Canadian home in five housed a regular smoker indoors. This was a 31% decrease from 1999. Improvements have been noted in all provinces, and some of these have been substantial (Figure 5). Despite these improvements, more than two thirds of a million (688,000) children under the age of 12 were still regularly exposed to second-hand smoke at home.

In homes where smoking was *allowed*, it was nevertheless usually restricted in some fashion, and these restrictions were about the same whether or not there were children living at home. The most common restrictions were the following.

- limiting smoking to certain rooms only (50% of homes where smoking was allowed)
- abstaining from smoking inside (21%)
- opening windows or otherwise increasing ventilation (17%)

Second-hand Smoke at Work

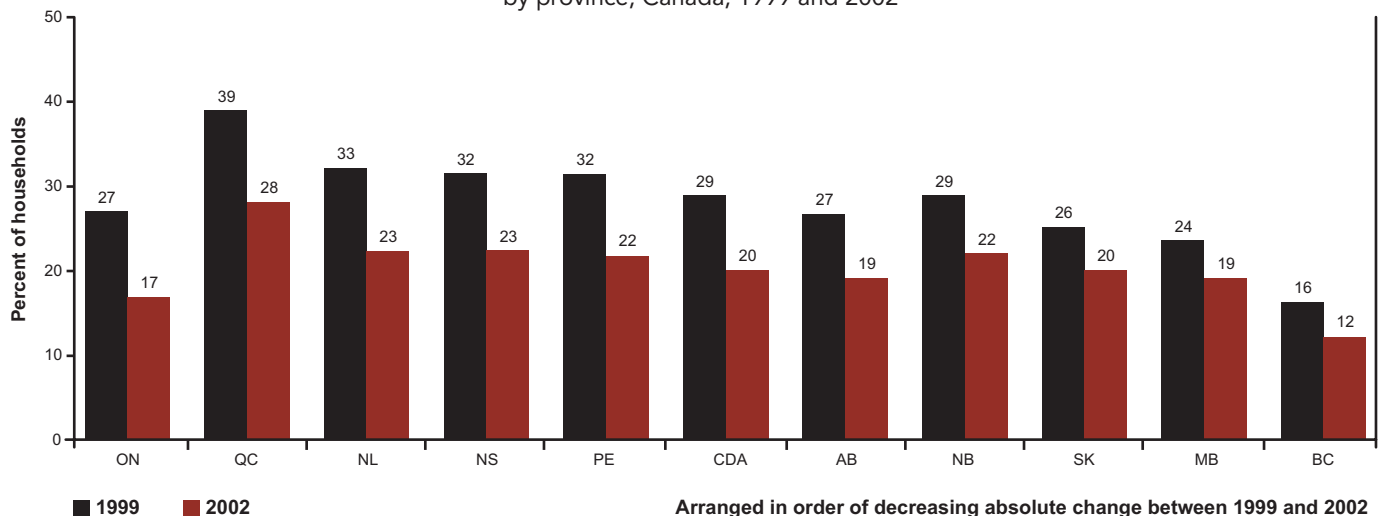
A large majority of Canadian workers (85%) were protected in 2002 by a complete ban on smoking at work (65%) or by having designated areas for smoking (20%). This represented a small increase since 2001 in the extent of complete bans (61% in 2001) but almost no change in workplaces with designated smoking areas (21% in 2001).

Survey Methods

Objectives: The Canadian Tobacco Use Monitoring Survey (CTUMS) was initiated in 1999 to provide Health Canada with reliable data on tobacco use and related issues. The primary objective is to track changes in smoking status and amount smoked, especially for those aged 15–24, who are most at risk for taking up smoking.

Population Coverage: The target population for CTUMS is all persons aged 15 and older living in Canada, excluding residents of Yukon, Nunavut, and the Northwest Territories, and full-time residents of institutions. In addition, because this was a telephone survey, the 3% of Canadians without telephones are not included.

FIGURE 5
Homes where someone regularly smoked indoors
by province, Canada, 1999 and 2002



Sources: 1999 and 2002 Canadian Tobacco Use Monitoring Surveys

Data Collection: The results in this fact sheet are based on data collection that took place between February and December 2002. Statistics Canada conducted computer-assisted interviews by telephone; only direct reports (i.e., not third-party) with selected persons were accepted.

Survey Design: Information about household composition and second-hand smoke in the home was collected in 50,906 households. In about half of these households, one person aged 15 or older was selected to obtain information on smoking habits. This amounted to 23,341 individuals in 2002, about half of whom were aged 15–24. With this sampling frame, it is possible to estimate the smoking prevalence of Canadians aged 15 and older within about $\pm 2\%$ each year. The margin of error will increase when estimating the prevalence of tobacco use for subgroups. To allow provincial comparisons of approximately equal reliability, the overall sample size for the survey was divided equally across all 10 Canadian provinces. A few topics were introduced or modified in the questionnaire in July 2002, and the sample for these was 11,909. They include non-cigarette forms of tobacco use and visits to a physician

and dentist (to establish a denominator for those smokers receiving advice to quit from these health professionals).

The overall response rate, which takes into consideration the participation of both households and individuals, was 82% for the 2002 CTUMS data collection. Every telephone number called by Statistics Canada was fully accounted for in order to calculate the survey's response rate accurately and to properly weight the data to represent the Canadian population.

Microdata: A microdata set containing the results of the survey is available for purchase from Statistics Canada. The public release of the data was announced on July 30, 2003, in Statistics Canada's *The Daily*.

Terminology: A section containing definitions of the main terminology used in this fact sheet can be found at the following website location:
<www.gosmokefree.ca/ctums>.