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Key findings from the 2022 Online California Adult Tobacco Survey

The Online California Adult Tobacco Survey (Online CATS) is an online survey funded by the California Department of Public Health, California Tobacco Prevention Program. The purpose of the survey is to gather statewide data on tobacco use behavior and tobacco-related beliefs; evaluate tobacco-related policies and campaigns; and create a comprehensive picture of tobacco use among California residents. This data brief focuses on results from the 2022 survey administration. In this data brief, tobacco use refers to commercial tobacco products and not to products used for medicinal and sacred purposes by American Indian communities.

Gallup Inc. was contracted by the California Department of Public Health, California Tobacco Prevention Program to administer the Online CATS since 2019. California adults aged 18 to 64 years were recruited by Gallup from the probability-based Gallup Panel and from the non-probability-based Toluna Panel. A total of 7,037 California adults completed the survey in 2022. The survey was administered in two waves: from March 28, 2022, to May 2, 2022 (n=3,441) and from August 25, 2022, to September 19, 2022 (n=3,596). All materials were made available in English and Spanish. Estimates in this data brief have been weighted to account for the sampling design and to be representative of California's adult (age 18 to 64 years) population.

Key findings

Tobacco use

One out of five (19.1%) Californians reported using any tobacco product in the past 30 days in 2022. Vapes (i.e., e-cigarettes) was the most used tobacco product among those surveyed at 11.8%, followed by cigarettes (6.6%), little cigars or cigarillos (3.5%), cigars (3.4%), hookah tobacco or shisha (3.3%), smokeless tobacco products (e.g., chewing tobacco, snuff, snus) (2.6%), nicotine pouches (2.2%), pipe tobacco (1.8%), and heated tobacco products (1.3%). Among Californians who use tobacco products in the past 30 days, a majority (61.1%) exclusively use only one type of tobacco product (Table 1).

Table 1. Exclusive, dual-, and poly-tobacco use among adults who used any tobacco products in the past 30 days by product, California, 2022

PRODUCTS	EXCLUSIVE USE*	DUAL USE†	POLYUSE‡
Cigarettes	35.2%	21.5%	43.4%
Cigars	20.5%	21.4%	58.1%
Heated tobacco products	0.6%	1.3%	98.1%
Hookah tobacco or shisha	27.8%	17.8%	54.4%
Little cigars or cigarillos	17.2%	22.6%	60.2%
Nicotine pouches	17.1%	18.3%	64.6%
Pipe tobacco	13.8%	7.9%	78.3%
Smokeless tobacco products	22.9%	15.4%	61.7%
Vapes	50.2%	20.6%	29.2%
Any tobacco products	61.1%	18.1%	20.8%

* Exclusive use is past 30-day use of only one tobacco product type (e.g., using cigarettes only).

† Dual use is past 30-day use of two different tobacco product types (e.g., using only cigarettes and vapes).

‡ Polyuse is past 30-day use of three or more different tobacco product types (e.g., using cigarettes, vapes, and cigars).

Three out of four (77.1%) reported using flavored tobacco products among Californians who used tobacco products in the past 30 days.¹ Flavored tobacco products do not include unflavored or tobacco-flavored products. Flavored tobacco product use was highest among individuals who use vapes (90.6%), followed by smokeless tobacco products (80.5%), hookah tobacco or shisha (79.6%), heated tobacco products (73.1%), nicotine pouches (72.3%), cigarettes (57.8%), little cigars or cigarillos (57.7%), pipe tobacco (48.7%), and cigars (40.3%).

Tobacco cessation

Among adults who smoked cigarettes in the past 30 days, 30.4% reported that they plan to quit smoking in the next six months and 40.8% made a quit attempt in the past year. Among adults who used vapes in the past 30 days, 42.9% reported that they plan to quit vaping in the next six months and 39.5% made a quit attempt in the past year.

Secondhand exposure

Approximately half (50.9%) of participants reported being exposed to either secondhand tobacco smoke or secondhand vape in the past two weeks. Higher rates of secondhand exposure were observed in adults who used tobacco products in the past 30 days (74.9%) compared to those who did not (45.3%).

Among Californians who reported past two-week secondhand tobacco smoke or vape exposure, sidewalks were the most reported location of exposure (51.8%), followed by homes

¹ The survey was administered before the effective date of California Senate Bill (SB) 793, which prohibited the sale of most flavored tobacco products. SB 793 became effective on December 21, 2022, after California voters upheld the law during the November 2022 election.

(40.8%), recreational spaces (including parks and beaches) (40.0%), outdoor dining areas (31.6%), and stores or shopping malls (28.6%).²

Tobacco-related attitudes

Californians were asked their opinions about strategies that would advance California’s goal of ending the commercial tobacco epidemic. Overall, more than half of Californians supported these policies (Table 2). The highest agreement was for smokefree outdoor dining areas (81.1%), followed by smokefree multi-unit housing (66.3%), and reducing the number of stores that sell tobacco (64.7%).

Table 2 shows that agreement for these policies were lower among Californians who used tobacco products in the past 30 days compared to those who did not. The differences in agreement ranged from 16.5 percentage points (“Smoking should not be allowed in outdoor dining areas at restaurants”) to 28.9 percentage points (“The sale of flavored tobacco products should not be allowed”).

Table 2. Agreement with tobacco-related strategies by past 30-day tobacco product use, California, 2022

STATEMENTS	OVERALL	PAST 30-DAY TOBACCO PRODUCT USE	
		YES	NO
Smoking should not be allowed in outdoor dining areas at restaurants.	81.1%	67.8%	84.3%
Apartment complexes should require all the units to be tobacco smokefree and vape-free.	66.3%	45.2%	71.3%
The number of stores that sell tobacco should be reduced.	64.7%	48.0%	69.0%
The sale of products that contain nicotine should not be allowed, except for aids to help smokers quit, such as nicotine gum and patches.	61.1%	46.1%	64.6%
There should be a gradual ban on the sale of tobacco products.	59.6%	43.7%	63.4%
The sale of flavored tobacco products should not be allowed.	59.3%	35.9%	64.8%

² The May 2023 version of this publication underreported the locations of exposure due to a coding error and has been corrected.

Suggested citation

California Department of Public Health, California Tobacco Prevention Program. *Key Findings from the 2022 Online California Adult Tobacco Survey*. California Department of Public Health; January 2024.

California Tobacco Prevention Program's adult surveillance system

The California Tobacco Prevention Program's adult surveillance system comprises of several projects, including the California Health Interview Survey and Online CATS. Online CATS is used by the program for emerging tobacco-related topics that requires rapid response and for gathering beliefs, attitudes, and opinions among California adults. Due to the smaller sample size compared to the California Health Interview Survey, Online CATS is not intended to provide demographic subanalysis. Additionally, the results in this data brief may lack agreement with other surveys due to differing methodology; however, this does not reduce the value of one survey over another.

Additional factsheets, infographics, and reports from surveys that are part of the program's adult surveillance system can be found at [CDPH.ca.gov/tobacco](https://cdph.ca.gov/tobacco).