

# The NSDUH Report

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## Past Month Cigarette Use among Racial and Ethnic Groups

Cigarette smoking declined in the U.S. between 2002 and 2004, but variation in rates of use remains among race and ethnic groups.<sup>1</sup> The National Survey on Drug Use and Health (NSDUH) asks

persons aged 12 or older about their past month cigarette smoking (i.e., current smoking) as well as the number of days they smoked cigarettes during that time and the average number of cigarettes smoked per day on each of the days they smoked.<sup>2,3</sup>

NSDUH also asks a series of questions about race/ethnicity. First, respondents are asked about their Hispanic origin, then, when applicable, to identify the Hispanic ethnic grouping that best describes them.<sup>4</sup> Respondents are then asked to identify which racial grouping best describes them: white, black or African American, American Indian or Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian, Other Pacific Islander, Asian, or other. Individuals who identify themselves as Asian also are asked to name an Asian ethnic grouping that best describes them.<sup>5</sup> Respondents may select more than one race. For this report, respondents identifying themselves as Hispanic were assigned to the Hispanic group regardless of their racial identification. Respondents not identifying themselves as Hispanic were grouped according to their racial identification. Thus, for example, “white” refers to those identifying themselves as non-Hispanic white.

### In Brief

- In 2002-2004, rates of cigarette smoking in the past month among persons aged 12 or older were highest among American Indians or Alaska Natives (34.8 percent) and persons of two or more races (34.6 percent); rates were lowest among Asians (13.4 percent)
- Among Asians, Koreans reported the highest rate of past month smoking (24.9 percent) and Chinese reported the lowest (7.5 percent)
- Among Hispanic current smokers, Puerto Ricans and Cubans were more likely to report daily cigarette smoking than Central or South Americans and Mexicans

This issue of *The NSDUH Report* focuses on past month cigarette use among persons aged 12 or older and presents findings by race and ethnicity. All findings presented in this issue are annual averages based on combined 2002, 2003, and 2004 NSDUH data.

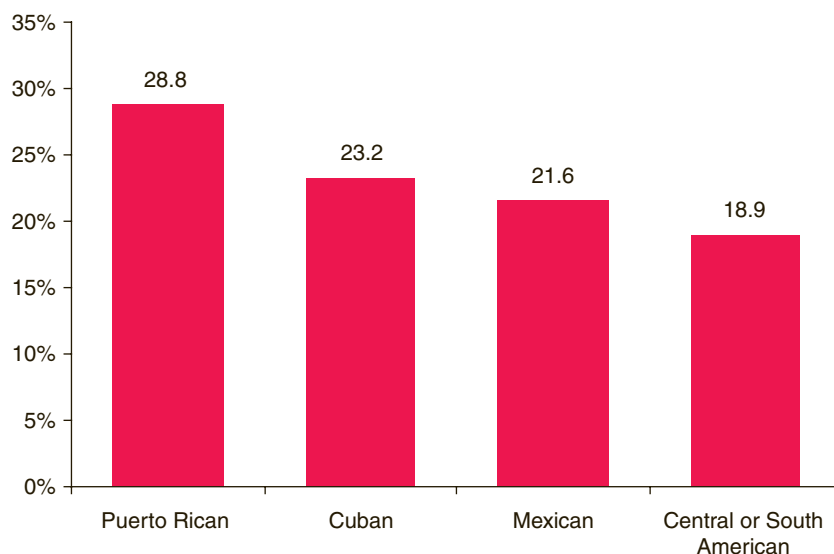
### Past Month Cigarette Use

In 2002-2004, 25.4 percent of persons aged 12 or older (60.5 million persons) smoked cigarettes in the month prior to the survey. Rates of smoking in the past month were highest among American Indians or Alaska Natives (34.8 percent) and persons of two or more races (34.6 percent), followed by Native Hawaiians or Other Pacific Islanders (28.7 percent), whites (26.6 percent), blacks (24.9 percent), Hispanics (21.9 percent), and Asians (13.4 percent). Among Hispanics, Puerto Ricans were more likely to have smoked in the past month than respondents who identified themselves as Mexican and Central or South American (Figure 1). Among Asians, Korean respondents reported the highest rate of past month smoking and Chinese respondents the lowest (Figure 2).

### Number of Cigarettes Smoked per Day in the Past 30 Days

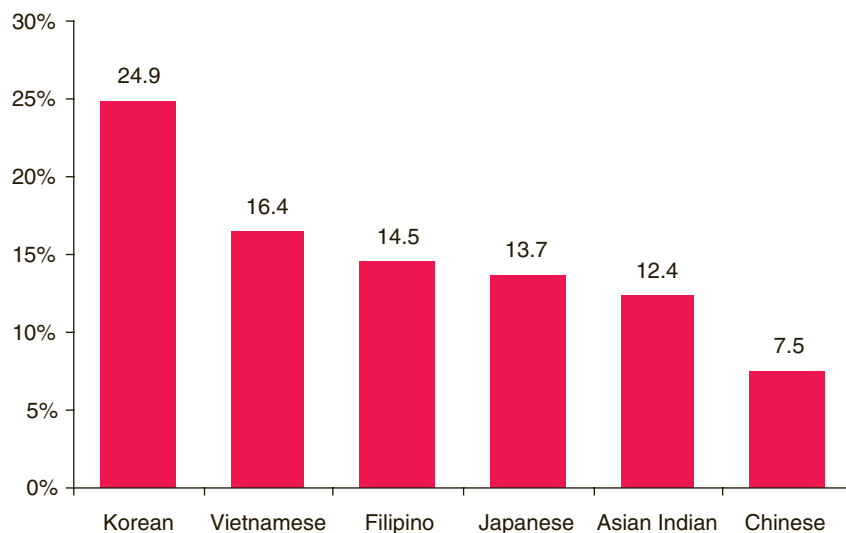
Past month smokers smoked an average of 13.2 cigarettes per day on the days that they smoked. Among smokers, persons of two or more races smoked the highest average number of cigarettes per day on the days that they smoked (15.3 cigarettes), followed by

**Figure 1. Percentages of Hispanics Aged 12 or Older Reporting Past Month Cigarette Use: 2002-2004**



Source: SAMHSA, 2002, 2003, and 2004 NSDUHs.

**Figure 2. Percentages of Asians Aged 12 or Older Reporting Past Month Cigarette Use: 2002-2004**

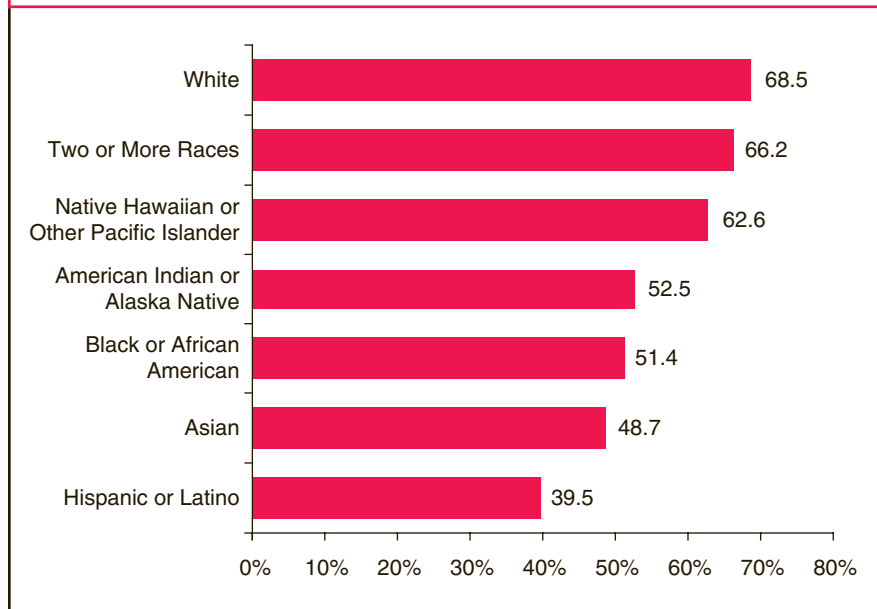


Source: SAMHSA, 2002, 2003, and 2004 NSDUHs.

whites (14.9 cigarettes), American Indians or Alaska Natives (10.2 cigarettes), Native Hawaiians or Other Pacific Islanders (9.4 cigarettes), blacks (9.3 cigarettes),

Asians (7.6 cigarettes), and Hispanics (6.7 cigarettes).

**Figure 3. Percentages of Respondents Aged 12 or Older Reporting Daily Smoking among Past Month Smokers, by Race/Ethnicity: 2002-2004**



Source: SAMHSA, 2002, 2003, and 2004 NSDUHs.

## Number of Days Smoked in the Past 30 Days

Past month smokers smoked cigarettes on an average of 23 days during the month before the survey. Whites and persons of two or more races smoked cigarettes on an average of 24.1 and 23.6 days, respectively, in the past month compared with Native Hawaiians or Other Pacific Islanders (22.4 days), blacks (21.3 days), American Indians or Alaska Natives (20.6 days), Asians (20.6 days), and Hispanics (17.3 days). Among Hispanic smokers, Puerto Ricans and Cubans reported smoking on an average of 21 days in the past month compared with Central or South Americans who smoked on 17.2 days or Mexicans who smoked on 15.9 days in the past month.

## Daily Cigarette Use

In 2002-2004, 16.0 percent of persons aged 12 or older smoked daily (i.e., smoked a cigarette on each of the past 30 days), and among current smokers, 62.9 percent (or 38 million) smoked daily. Among past month smokers, whites were more likely to be daily smokers than American Indians or Alaska Natives, blacks, and Asians (Figure 3). As a group, Hispanic smokers were less likely to be daily smokers than smokers of all other racial/ethnic groups; however, there were some differences within the Hispanic group. Puerto Rican and Cuban smokers (56.3 and 56.2 percent, respectively) were more likely to report daily cigarette smoking than Central or South American and Mexican smokers (37.8 and 34.0 percent, respectively).

Among past month smokers, daily smokers smoked an average

of 17.5 cigarettes per day in the past month. Among daily smokers, persons of two or more races and whites smoked the highest average number of cigarettes per day (18.9 and 18.8 cigarettes, respectively). Among Asian daily smokers, Japanese respondents reported smoking the highest average number of cigarettes per day. Among Hispanic daily smokers, Cubans reported smoking the highest average number of cigarettes per day.

## End Notes

<sup>1</sup> Office of Applied Studies. (2005). *Results from the 2004 National Survey on Drug Use and Health: National findings* (DHHS Publication No. SMA 05-4062, NSDUH Series H-28). Rockville, MD: Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration.

<sup>2</sup> Current cigarette smokers were asked to report the total number of days in the past month that they smoked part or all of a cigarette (i.e., range of 1 to 30 days). If respondents did not know or refused to answer the question, they were asked for their best estimate of the number of days they smoked. Response options were (1) 1 or 2 days, (2) 3 to 5 days, (3) 6 to 9 days, (4) 10 to 19 days, (5) 20 to 29 days, or (6) all 30 days.

<sup>3</sup> Respondents were asked how many cigarettes they smoked per day, on average, on the days they smoked cigarettes during the past 30 days. Response options were (1) less than 1 cigarette per day, (2) 1 cigarette per day, (3) 2 to 5 cigarettes per day, (4) 6 to 15 cigarettes per day (about ½ pack), (5) 16 to 25 cigarettes per day (about 1 pack), (6) 25 to 35 cigarettes per day (about 1½ packs), or (7) more than 35 cigarettes per day (about 2 packs or more). A continuous variable was created to enable the calculation of the average number of cigarettes smoked per day on the days smoked. The following values were assigned to each category: 0.5 = less than 1 cigarette per day; 1 = 1 cigarette per day; 3.5 = 2 to 5 cigarettes per day; 10.5 = 6 to 15 cigarettes per day; 20.5 = 16 to 25 cigarettes per day; 30.5 = 26 to 35 cigarettes per day; and 50 = more than 35 cigarettes per day.

<sup>4</sup> Response options were Mexican, Mexican American, Mexicano, or Chicano; Puerto Rican; Central or South American; Cuban or Cuban American; Dominican (from Dominican Republic); Spanish (from Spain); and other.

<sup>5</sup> Response options were Asian Indian, Chinese, Filipino, Japanese, Korean, Vietnamese, and other.

For change of address, corrections, or to be removed from this list, please e-mail: [shortreports@samhsa.hhs.gov](mailto:shortreports@samhsa.hhs.gov).

Research findings from the SAMHSA 2002, 2003, and 2004 National Surveys on Drug Use and Health (NSDUHs)

## Past Month Cigarette Use among Racial and Ethnic Groups

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- Among Hispanic current smokers, Puerto Ricans and Cubans were more likely to report daily cigarette smoking than Central or South Americans and Mexicans

The National Survey on Drug Use and Health (NSDUH) is an annual survey sponsored by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). Prior to 2002, this survey was called the National Household Survey on Drug Abuse (NHSDA). The combined 2002, 2003, and 2004 data are based on information obtained from 203,670 persons aged 12 or older. The survey collects data by administering questionnaires to a representative sample of the population through face-to-face interviews at their place of residence.

*The NSDUH Report* is prepared by the Office of Applied Studies (OAS), SAMHSA, and by RTI International in Research Triangle Park, North Carolina. (RTI International is a trade name of Research Triangle Institute.)

Information on NSDUH used in compiling data for this issue is available in the following publications:

Office of Applied Studies. (2005). *Results from the 2004 National Survey on Drug Use and Health: National findings* (DHHS Publication No. SMA 05-4062, NSDUH Series H-28). Rockville, MD: Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration.

Office of Applied Studies. (2004). *Results from the 2003 National Survey on Drug Use and Health: National findings* (DHHS Publication No. SMA 04-3964, NSDUH Series H-25). Rockville, MD: Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration.

Office of Applied Studies. (2003). *Results from the 2002 National Survey on Drug Use and Health: National findings* (DHHS Publication No. SMA 03-3836, NSDUH Series H-25). Rockville, MD: Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration.

Also available online: <http://www.oas.samhsa.gov>.

Because of improvements and modifications to the 2002 NSDUH, estimates from the 2002, 2003, and 2004 surveys should not be compared with estimates from the 2001 or earlier versions of the survey to examine changes over time.



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