

## Gender Differences In Current Smoking Characteristics Among Working Adults - United States, 2004-2010

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**Background:** Cigarette smoking remains a major cause of morbidity and mortality. Although gender differences in cigarette smoking in the U.S. population have been documented, information on these differences among the adult working population is limited.

**Objective:** We aimed to describe gender differences in current cigarette smoking among working U.S. adults.

**Methods:** We analyzed the 2004–2010 National Health Interview Survey data for adults (age  $\geq 18$  years) employed in the week prior to the interview (N=113,266). Current cigarette smokers were defined as those who reported having smoked  $\geq 100$  cigarettes during their lifetime and currently smoke every day or some days. Self-reported data on select respiratory diseases and health status were examined. Prevalence odds ratios (PORs) adjusted for age were calculated.

**Results:** Of an estimated 141 million adults employed in the week prior to the interview, 21.0% were current cigarette smokers. Cigarette smoking prevalence was significantly higher among males than females (23.1% versus 18.6%; POR=1.3; 95% Confidence Interval (CI): 1.3–1.4) and males were more likely than females to smoke  $> 1$  pack/day. The higher prevalence of cigarette smoking among males than females remained after considering level of education, health insurance, and income. Males working in food preparation and serving related (36.0%) and females in construction and extraction (34.9%) occupational groups had highest smoking prevalence. Males working in production (POR=1.3; 95% CI: 1.1–1.4) and transportation and material moving (POR=1.1; 95% CI: 1.0–1.3) occupations were more likely than females to report cigarette smoking. Females working in health care support (POR=1.6; 95% CI: 1.1–2.3) and protective services (POR=1.6; 95% CI: 1.2–2.1) were more likely than males to report cigarette smoking. Among working adults who report cigarette smoking, females were more likely than males to have current asthma (POR=2.2; 95% CI: 1.1–4.5), chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (POR=2.4; 95% CI: 2.0–2.7), heart disease (POR=1.3; 95% CI: 1.1–1.5) and to report poor self-evaluated health status (POR= 1.2; 95% CI: 1.0–1.3).

**Conclusion:** These results indicate that among working adults males tend to be heavier smokers than females, yet women are more likely to have adverse health outcomes and to report poorer health status. These results identify specific occupational groups than can benefit from effective smoking cessation interventions and prevention measures.

Keywords: Occupation, Smoking, Gender and Health status.

This abstract is funded by: None

Am J Respir Crit Care Med 185;2012:A6049

Internet address: [www.atsjournals.org](http://www.atsjournals.org)

Online Abstracts Issue