Tobacco use is the single most preventable cause of disease, disability, and death in the United States, with more than 480,000 people dying each year from tobacco-related illness. Cigarette smoking is associated with cancer, emphysema, chronic bronchitis, heart disease, and stroke. In addition, there are health effects for non-smokers who are exposed to secondhand smoke, including an increased risk of dying from lung cancer or heart disease, and children are at increased risk of sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS), ear infections and asthma. Mothers who smoke cigarettes during pregnancy are at risk for poor birth outcomes, such as preterm birth, low birth weight, and stillbirth.

**Key facts about tobacco use**

Since 2001, the percent of Dakota County students who reported smoking on one or more days in the previous month decreased significantly. The number of adults who smoke also decreased in recent years. State law that prohibits smoking in workplaces and public places has decreased secondhand smoke exposure in Minnesota, but exposure in homes and cars is still a concern.

**Cigarette smoking by Dakota County youth**

- The percent of Dakota County students who reported smoking cigarettes on one or more days in the previous month steadily decreased in 9th graders from 2001 to 2016. The percentages were below the state for all grades.

![Graph showing decrease in 9th Graders Who Smoked Cigarettes on One or More Days in the Past Month](image)

- The percent of students who reported smoking every day during the previous 30 days also steadily decreased in Dakota County 9th graders from 2001 to 2016 (2016 percent: less than one percent of 9th graders).
Youth access to tobacco in Dakota County

- Eight percent of compliance checks conducted in licensed retail outlets in Dakota County from 2011–2015 resulted in an illegal tobacco sale to an underage person.

- In 2016, one percent of 8th and 9th graders and three percent of 11th graders reported using smokeless tobacco during the previous 30 days, similar to the state for 8th graders and slightly below the state for 9th and 11th graders.

- In 2016, five percent of 8th graders, 10 percent of 9th graders and 17 percent of 11th graders used an electronic cigarette during the past 30 days, slightly below the state for 8th graders, slightly above the state for 9th graders and similar to the state for 11th graders.

Exposure to secondhand tobacco smoke

- More than 7,300 adult non-smokers die of lung cancer and an additional 34,000 die of coronary heart disease each year due to secondhand smoke exposure.

- The Freedom to Breathe Act (2007) requires all indoor Minnesota workplaces and public places to be smoke-free.

- Six percent of Dakota County adults 25 and older reported exposure in a car in the previous week and four percent said someone smokes regularly in their home (2014).

- Twenty-one percent of Dakota County 5th graders reported being in a room with someone who was smoking one or more days in the past seven days (2016).

- Twelve percent of Dakota County 5th graders reported riding in a car with someone who was smoking one or more days in the past seven days (2016).

Tobacco use by adults

- In 2014, 14 percent of Minnesota adults 18 or older currently smoked every day or some days. This is below the U.S. rate (17 percent).

- Fifteen percent of Minnesota 18–24 year olds currently smoke (2014).

- In 2015, five percent of Dakota County mothers reported smoking during pregnancy, a decrease from six percent in 2014.

Adult tobacco cessation

- Fifty-three percent of current Minnesota adult smokers stopped smoking in the past 12 months because they were trying to quit (2014).

- Fifteen percent of Minnesota adult smokers who tried to quit in the past year were successful.

About this Community Health Profile

For more information about the Dakota County community health assessment, contact: Melanie Countryman, Epidemiologist (melanie.countryman@co.dakota.mn.us or 651-554-6131).

For more information:

- U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)

- Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) [www.health.state.mn.us](http://www.health.state.mn.us)

- National Cancer Institute [www.cancer.gov/cancertopics/tobacco](http://www.cancer.gov/cancertopics/tobacco)