



Fact Sheet

Physicians *for a* Smoke-Free Canada

Smokers of “light” cigarettes Findings from the Canadian Tobacco Use Monitoring Survey

The Canadian Tobacco Use Monitoring Survey is conducted annually by Statistics Canada for Health Canada. The information used in this analysis was provided through interviews conducted by Statistics Canada between February and December 2003.

This fact sheet describes 2003 results concerning the behaviour and beliefs of Canadian smokers who purchase so-called “light” cigarettes.

‘Strength’ of cigarettes smoked

Most Canadian smokers purchase so-called ‘light’, ‘mild’, ‘ultra-light’ or ‘ultra mild’ cigarettes, although ‘regular’ strength is still the single most popular variant cigarettes for both men and women.

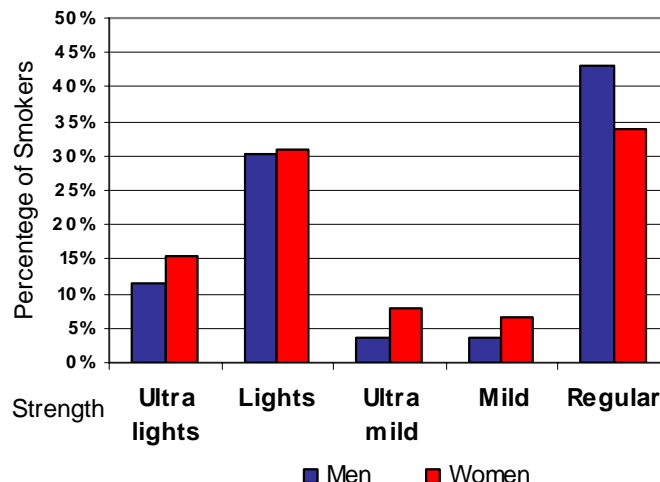
The gap between the percentage of women that smoke regular cigarettes and those that smoke light cigarettes is much smaller than it is for men.

Approximately 3 million Canadians smoke ‘light’ or ‘mild’ cigarettes, including 49.3% of men smokers and 60.9% of women smokers smoke some form of light or mild cigarettes.

More women smoke mild cigarettes than men.

Strength of Cigarettes Smoked		
	Men	
	Count	Percentage
Ultra lights	338,909	11.6%
Lights	886,662	30.2%
Ultra Mild	110,497	3.8%
Mild	109,022	3.7%
Regular	1,262,610	43.1%
	Women	
	Count	Percentage
Ultra lights	372,601	15.5%
Lights	739,743	30.8%
Ultra Mild	193,397	8.1%
Mild	156,449	6.5%
Regular	814,764	33.9%

Strength of Cigarettes Smoked



Beliefs about Light and Mild Cigarettes:

Canadians who smoke reduced-strength cigarettes have beliefs that these cigarettes are less harmful, even though governments and other health authorities have cautioned that this is not the case.

Among smokers of these cigarettes:

- Almost twenty percent of Canadians who smoke 'reduced-strength' cigarettes believe that these cigarettes deliver less tar than regular cigarettes.
- Fifteen percent believe that these cigarettes reduce the risks to their health.

“Do you smoke [your brand of reduced strength] cigarettes because you believe they reduce the amount of tar you inhale compared to regular cigarettes”

	Total	
	Count	Percentage
Yes	629,758	19.3%
No	2,173,776	66.8%
No answer	451,419	13.9%

“Do you smoke [your brand of reduced strength] cigarettes because you believe they reduce the risk to your health compared to regular cigarettes”

	Total	
	Count	Percentage
Yes	483,608	14.9%
No	2,356,760	72.4%
No answer	414,585	12.7%

Ten percent believe that these cigarettes allow them to reduce the risks of smoking without having to actually give up smoking.

The same percentage of men and women believe that light and mild cigarettes reduce the risks of smoking without actually giving up smoking – 10.5% of males and 10.4% of females.

16.2% of females over the age of 45 believe that by smoking light and mild cigarettes they are reducing the risks of smoking without having to actually give up smoking. This is the largest percentage for any group.

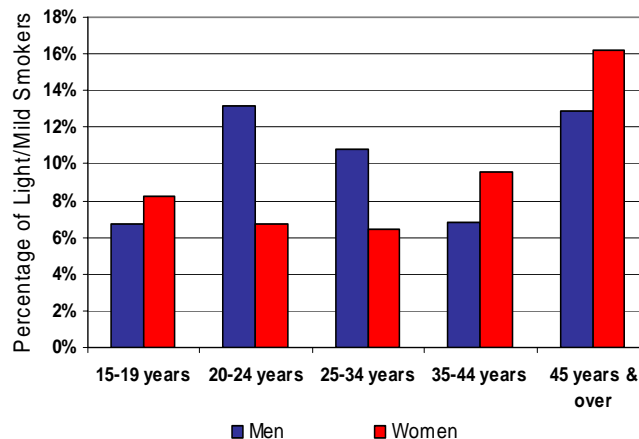
“Do you smoke [your brand of reduced-strength] cigarettes because you believe they reduce the risks of smoking without actually having to give up smoking?”

	Men	
	Count	Percentage
Yes	175,875	10.5%
No	1,224,667	73.4%

	Women	
	Count	Percentage
Yes	165,478	10.4%
No	1,271,819	80.2%

	Total	
	Count	Percentage
Yes	341,353	10.5%
No	2,496,486	76.7%

Believe That Light or Mild Cigarettes reduce the Risks of Smoking Without Having to Give Up Smoking



The fine print (adapted from Health Canada www.gosmokefree.ca)

Survey methods: 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.

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.

Terminology

Smoking status has been defined to be consistent with the definitions used in other national Health Canada surveys that collect data on tobacco use.

Smoking prevalence: the number of smokers in a specified group, divided by the total population of that group, expressed as a percentage. May also be referred to as the "smoking rate".

Cigarette consumption: the amount reported smoked by either daily or occasional smokers. In the CTUMS fact sheets and supplementary tables, the context for cigarette consumption is normally that of daily smokers.

Current smoker: includes daily smokers and non-daily smokers (also known as occasional smokers). Determined from the response to the question "At the present time do you smoke cigarettes every day, occasionally, or not at all?"

Daily smoker: refers to those who respond "every day" to the question "At the present time do you smoke cigarettes every day, occasionally or not at all?"

Non-daily smoker: often referred to as "occasional" smoker, refers to those who respond "Occasionally" to the question "At the present time do you smoke cigarettes every day, occasionally or not at all?"

Former smoker: was not smoking at the time of the interview, however, answered "YES" to the question "Have you smoked at least 100 cigarettes in your life?"

Short term quitter: former smoker who quit smoking less than one year prior to the survey. Determined by the response to the question "When did you stop smoking? Was it less than 1 year ago, 1 to 2 years ago, 3 to 5 years ago, or more than 5 years ago?"

Long term quitter: former smoker who quit smoking a year or more ago and has not resumed smoking during that time frame. Determined by the response to the question "When did you stop smoking? Was it less than 1 year ago, 1 to 2 years ago, 3 to 5 years ago, or more than 5 years ago?"

Ever-smokers: current and former smokers combined.

Quit rate: the ratio of the number of former smokers in a specified group divided by the number of ever-smokers in that group.

Never-smoker: was not smoking at the time of the interview and answered "NO" to the question "Have you smoked at least 100 cigarettes in your life?"

Non-smokers: former smokers and never-smokers combined.

Light smoker: a smoker who reports consuming between 1-10 cigarettes per day.

Moderate smoker: a smoker who reports consuming between 11-19 cigarettes per day.

Heavy smoker: a smoker who reports consuming 20 cigarettes or more per day.

Stages of Change: the 5 following stages describe readiness to quit smoking. They are defined according to the conventions of Abrams, Velicer, and colleagues.

Precontemplation: current smokers who answered "NO" to the question "Are you seriously considering quitting within the next six months?"

Contemplation: current smokers who either were seriously considering quitting within the next six months but answered "NO" to the question "Are you seriously considering quitting within the next 30 days?" OR were seriously considering quitting within the next 30 days, but did not try to quit for at least 24 hours during the past year (i.e., answered "NONE" to the question "In the last year, how many times have you quit for at least 24 hours?").

Preparation: current smokers who were seriously considering quitting within the next 30 days and had quit smoking at least once, for at least 24 hours, during the past year.

Action: former smokers (i.e., did not currently smoke) who had quit smoking within the past six months (inclusive).

Maintenance: former smokers who, at the time of the interview, had quit smoking at least six months ago.

This list of terminology contains definitions of terms that appear in fact sheets and supplementary tables based on the Canadian Tobacco Use Monitoring Survey (CTUMS).

