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Smoking Cessation Health Center

Poll: Fewer Americans Smoking

21% of U.S. Adults Are Current Smokers, Yearly Gallup Poll Shows

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WebMD Medical News

July 27, 2007 -- A new Gallup poll on smoking shows that 21% of U.S. adults currently smoke cigarettes.

That smoking statistic has never been lower since Gallup began polling people in the U.S. about smoking -- though it's roughly the same figure as in 1999, 2004, and 2006.

Gallup first started asking people in the U.S. about their smoking habits in 1944. Back then, 41% of poll participants reported smoking. Since then, smoking's health risks -- including cancer, heart disease, and many other conditions -- have been widely reported.

This year's Gallup smoking statistic is very low, but it's not quite an all-time low. "From a statistical perspective, a 22% reading in 2004 and a pair of 23% measurements in 1999 and 2006 would be considered equivalent to the current reading," states Gallup.

Curious about how Gallup's smoking poll results stack up against official government statistics on smoking?

In October 2006, the [CDC reported that nearly 21% of U.S. adults had smoked cigarettes in the past year](#) -- but that America's eight-year drop in smoking had stalled.

This year's Gallup poll on smoking also shows that most current smokers -- 55% -- report smoking less than a pack of cigarettes daily.

That's another sign of changing times. From 1944 until 1990, fewer than half of current smokers told Gallup that they smoked less than one pack of cigarettes per day.

Gallup's new smoking poll also shows that 81% of current smokers say they would like to give up smoking and 79% say they're addicted to smoking.

In addition, Gallup reports that one in four current smokers report starting to smoke before age 16. That percentage hasn't been lower since 1991, according to Gallup.

SOURCES: The Gallup Poll: "Latest Gallup Update Shows Cigarette Smoking Near Historic Lows," July 25, 2007. News release, Gallup. WebMD Medical News: "CDC: U.S. Smoking Decline Has Stalled."

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