

Smoking in Indigenous communities around the world

Smoking and its impact on health is a concern for Indigenous populations in other countries, such as Canada, New Zealand and the United States. Like Australia, smoking rates in these countries are

high among Indigenous people (see Table 1), and there is a significant gap in smoking rates between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people (see Graph 1).

Table 1: Prevalence rates of smoking for Indigenous people in Canada, New Zealand, the United States and Australia.

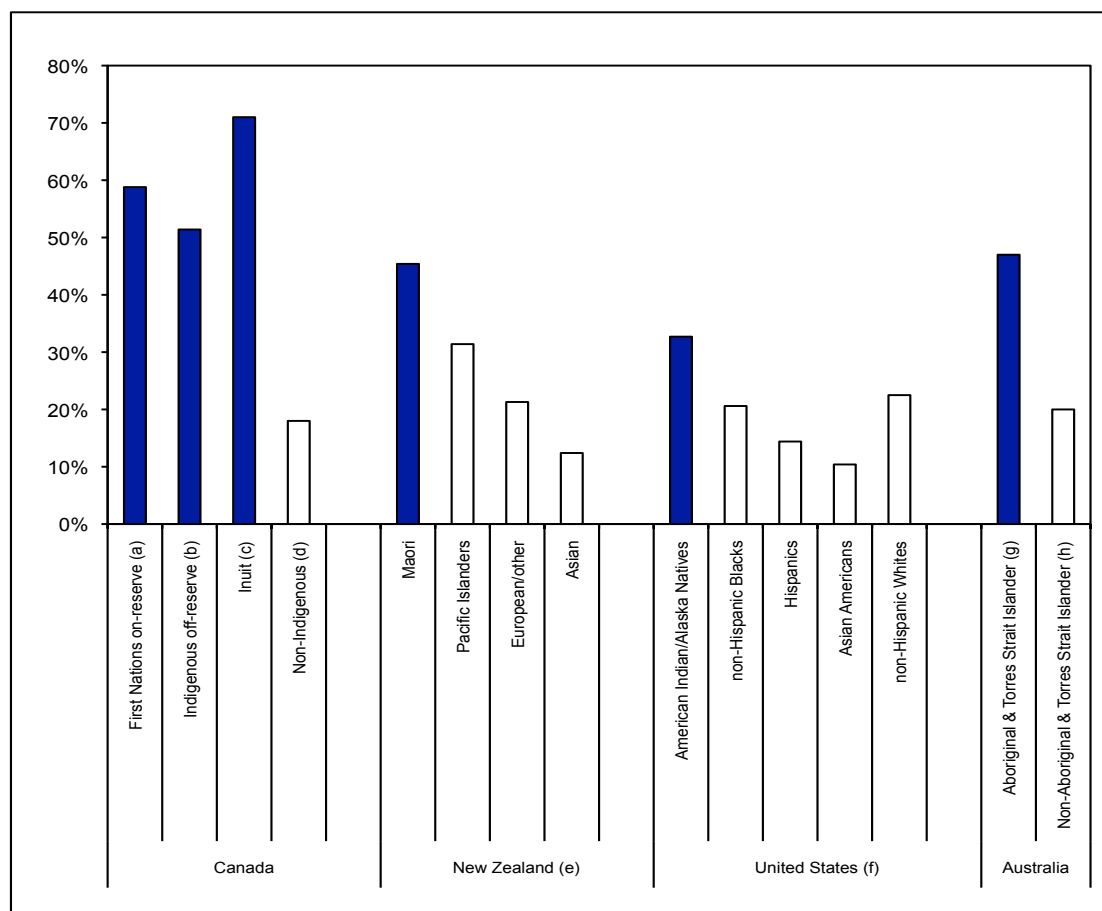
Country	Indigenous people	Prevalence of smoking
Canada	First Nations on-reserve ^(a)	58.8%
	Indigenous off-reserve ^(b)	51.4%
	Inuit ^(c)	71%
New Zealand	Maori ^(e)	45%
United States of America	American Indian/ Alaska Natives ^(f)	32.7%
Australia	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders ^(g)	47%

Other similarities among Indigenous people in these countries include:

- ✧ Factors that impact on high smoking rates include the impact of colonisation and low socio-economic status.
- ✧ When compared to non-Indigenous people, Indigenous people are likely to be younger when they start smoking.
- ✧ Smoking rates among pregnant women is higher for Indigenous than non-Indigenous women.
- ✧ Environmental tobacco smoking (or secondhand smoke) is a serious health issue; large numbers of Indigenous people (compared to non-Indigenous people) smoke indoors in the home.



Graph 1: Smoking rates in Canada, New Zealand, the United States and Australia showing differences in rates between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people



Notes and references

- Current smokers aged 18 and over. Source: Assembly of First Nations and First Nations Information Governance Committee. (2007). First Nations Regional Longitudinal Health Survey (RHS) 2002/03. Results for Adults, Youth and Children living in First Nations Communities. Ottawa: Assembly of First Nations and First Nations Information Governance Committee.
- Current smokers aged 15 and over. Source: Statistics Canada. (2001). Canadian Community Health Survey 2000/01. Ottawa: Statistics Canada 2001.
- Current smokers aged 18-45. Source: Environics Research Group and Canada, First Nations and Inuit Health Branch. (2004). 2004 Baseline Study among First Nations On-Reserve and Inuit in the North: Final Report. Ottawa: First Nations and Inuit Health Branch.
- Current smokers aged 15 and over (non age-standardised rates). Source: Health Canada. 'Canadian Tobacco Use Monitoring Survey 2009' Ottawa: Health Canada. <www.hc-sc.gc.ca/hc-ps/tobac-tabac/research-recherche/stat/ctums-esutc_2009-eng.php>. Accessed 25 September 2010.
- Current smokers aged 15-64 (age-standardised rates). Source: New Zealand Ministry of Health. (2009). Tobacco Trends 2008. A brief update of tobacco use in New Zealand. Wellington: Ministry of Health.
- Current smokers aged 18 and over. Source: Barnes, P.M., Adams, P.F. and Powell-Griner, E. 2010. 'Health Characteristics of the American Indian or Alaska Native Adult Population: United States, 2004-2008'. National Health Statistics Reports, 20, March 9, 2010.
- Current smokers aged 15 years and over. Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics. (2009). National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Survey, 2008. Cat. No. 4714.0. Accessed at <www.abs.gov.au> on 25 September 2010.
- Current smokers aged 15 and over. Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics. (2009). National Health Survey: Summary of Results, 2007-2008 (Reissue). Cat No. 4364.0. Accessed at www.abs.gov.au on 25 September 2010.



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Version 2 - Mar 2012

This brochure was produced with funding from the Commonwealth Department of Health and Ageing under the *Closing the Gap in Indigenous Health Outcomes – Tackling Smoking Initiative*.