

# Canadian Tobacco and Nicotine Survey, 2020

Released at 8:30 a.m. Eastern time in *The Daily*, Wednesday, March 17, 2021

---

Vaping is the act of inhaling and exhaling vapour produced by a device such as an electronic cigarette (e-cigarette), vape mod, vaporizer or vape pen.

While some use these devices to curtail or to quit smoking, vaping can also have negative effects, particularly among youth. According to Health Canada, the majority of vaping products contain nicotine, and vaping can lead to nicotine addiction. Vaping may also increase the risk of exposure to other harmful chemicals.

The Canadian Tobacco and Nicotine Survey was first conducted in November and December 2019 with the purpose of providing information on the types of products Canadians are using, how often they are vaping and their reason for doing so. This release represents the latest information about vaping behaviour in Canada.

## Vaping is more common among younger Canadians

There continues to be generational differences in the use of vaping devices.

In 2020, about 14% of youth aged 15 to 19 reported having vaped in the past 30 days, and over one-third (35%) reported having tried it at some point in their lives.

Among young adults aged 20 to 24, the proportion of those who had vaped in the past 30 days was similar (13%), and close to half (43%) reported ever having tried vaping.

In comparison, about 3% of adults aged 25 and older reported using a vaping product in the past 30 days, while almost 13% indicated that they had tried vaping at some point.

Across all age groups, of those who reported vaping in the past 30 days, 50% responded that they vaped on a daily basis.

There were also notable differences by gender, with men (19%) being more likely than women (14%) to have reported ever having tried vaping.

## Youth more likely to vape for recreational purposes

Similar to 2019, respondents were asked to identify their main reason for vaping in the 30 days preceding the survey. Users were classified across the following categories: (1) those who just wanted to try, (2) those who reported enjoying it, (3) those who vaped to reduce stress, (4) those who vaped to reduce or quit smoking, and (5) those who mentioned other reasons.

Among younger Canadians aged 15 to 19, the most commonly reported reasons for vaping were because they enjoyed it (27%), because they wanted to try (26%) and to reduce stress (23%). On the other hand, those aged 20 to 24 were more likely to report vaping because they enjoyed it (24%), to reduce stress (24%), or to reduce or quit smoking (22%).

Comparatively, older Canadians aged 25 and older were more likely to report vaping to reduce or quit smoking (53%).

Vaping to reduce stress increased among those aged 20 to 24—from 14% in 2019 to 24% 2020—while it edged up among those aged 15 to 19 and 25 and older.

For both men (43%) and women (33%), the most commonly reported reason for vaping was to reduce or quit smoking. However, women were twice as likely as men to have cited just wanting to try (20%) as their main reason for vaping.



## Older Canadians more likely to report smoking cigarettes

Approximately 1 in 10 Canadians reported smoking cigarettes on a regular basis, with Canadians aged 25 and older being almost three and a half times more likely to report being a current smoker (11%) than those aged 15 to 19 (3%).

These rates represent an overall decline in reported cigarette smoking from 2019 among those aged 25 and older and those aged 15 to 19, at 12% and 5%, respectively. The most significant decrease observed was among those aged 20 to 24, with 8% reporting that they were a current smoker in 2020 compared with 13% in 2019.

Smoking was more prevalent among men than women, with 12% of men reporting that they were current smokers compared with 9% of women.

### Note to readers

Data in this release are from the 2020 Canadian Tobacco and Nicotine Survey, which collects information about the prevalence of cigarette smoking, vaping and cannabis use. The survey was conducted in December 2020 and January 2021, and information was collected from 8,112 respondents. The target population was non-institutionalized people aged 15 and older living in Canada's ten provinces. Questionnaire content was developed in consultation with Health Canada.

In the context of this analysis, "vaping" includes vaping e-liquid—with and without nicotine (i.e., just flavouring)—using an e-cigarette, vape mod, vaporizer or vape pen. The analysis excludes vaping cannabis.

Respondents who reported having used a vaping product in the past 30 days were asked about the type of product used, frequency of use and reasons for vaping, while questions about perception of harm were posed to all respondents (i.e., both users and non-users). Survey sampling weights were applied so that the analyses would be representative of the Canadian population.

**Table 1**  
**Past-30-day use of vape, by age group, 2020**

	Population estimate	Estimate	95% lower confidence	95% upper confidence
	number		%	
<b>15-19</b>				
Vaped past 30 days	291,300	14.4	12.4	16.8
Did not vape past 30 days	1,724,600	85.6	83.2	87.6
<b>20-24</b>				
Vaped past 30 days	309,100	13.0	11.0	15.2
Did not vape past 30 days	2,074,500	87.0	84.8	89.0
<b>25+</b>				
Vaped past 30 days	854,600	3.2	2.6	3.8
Did not vape past 30 days	26,041,800	96.8	96.2	97.4

Source(s): Canadian Tobacco and Nicotine Survey, 2020 (5305).

### Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number 5305.

For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact us (toll-free 1-800-263-1136; 514-283-8300; [STATCAN.infostats-infostats.STATCAN@canada.ca](mailto:STATCAN.infostats-infostats.STATCAN@canada.ca)) or Media Relations (613-951-4636; [STATCAN.mediahotline-ligneinfomedias.STATCAN@canada.ca](mailto:STATCAN.mediahotline-ligneinfomedias.STATCAN@canada.ca)).