Women and Tobacco Use
Smoking and tobacco use pose a serious risk of death and disease for women. Annually, cigarette smoking kills an estimated 173,940 women in the United States.\(^1\)

In 2008, 21.1 million (18.3\%) women smoked in the United States compared to 24.8 million (23.1\%) men.\(^2\) Although fewer women smoke than men, the percentage difference between the two has continued to decrease. Today, with a much smaller gap between men's and women's smoking rates, women share a much larger burden of smoking-related diseases.

### Key Facts About Smoking Among Women

- Smoking is directly responsible for 80 percent of lung cancer deaths in women in the U.S. each year. In 1987, lung cancer surpassed breast cancer as the leading cause of cancer deaths among women in the U.S.\(^3\)
- Female smokers are nearly 13 times more likely to die from COPD (emphysema and chronic bronchitis) compared to women who have never smoked.\(^4\) In 2009, an estimated 70,490 women died of lung and bronchus cancer.\(^5\)
- Smoking is directly responsible for more than 90 percent of chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), or emphysema and chronic bronchitis deaths each year.\(^6\) In 2006, about 52 percent of all COPD deaths were in women. This is the seventh year in a row that women have outnumbered men in deaths attributable to COPD.\(^7\)
- Women who smoke also have an increased risk for developing cancers of the oral cavity, pharynx, larynx (voice box), esophagus, pancreas, kidney, bladder, and uterine cervix. Women who smoke also double their risk for developing coronary heart disease.\(^8\)
- Postmenopausal women who smoke have lower bone density than women who never smoked. Women who smoke have an increased risk for hip fracture compared to never smokers. Cigarette smoking also causes skin wrinkling that could make smokers appear less attractive and prematurely old.\(^9\)
- Women have been extensively targeted in tobacco marketing dominated by themes of association between social desirability, independence, weight control and smoking messages conveyed through advertisements featuring slim, attractive, and athletic models.\(^10\)
- Teenage girls often start to smoke to avoid weight gain and to identify themselves as independent and glamorous, which reflect images projected by tobacco advertising. Cigarette advertising portrays cigarettes as causing slimness and implies that cigarette smoking suppresses appetite.\(^11\)
- The decline in smoking among high school girls has slowed recently. Between 1999 and 2003, cigarette smoking prevalence among high school girls decreased by 37 percent. However, between 2003 and 2007, there was only a 2.3 percent decrease in prevalence of cigarette use among high school girls.\(^12\)
- Middle school white girls had the highest percentage of smoking (8.6 percent) in 2004.\(^13\)

### Smoking During Pregnancy

In 2005, 10.7 percent of women smoked during pregnancy, down almost 42 percent from 1990.\(^14\)

- American Indian/Alaska Native women have the highest rate of smoking during pregnancy (17.8 percent).
- 13.9 percent of pregnant non-Hispanic white women were smokers compared with 8.5 percent pregnant non-Hispanic black women.