

Know the Risks: Asthma and Tobacco

Students with asthma experimenting with or using tobacco products may experience:

- worsening lung function
- increased asthma symptoms
- poor asthma control
- trips to the hospital or emergency room
- missed school days

Although cigarette use is declining, e-cigarette use is at epidemic levels.¹



Approximately **40%** of students **believe** there was **low or no risk** of negative health effects from e-cigarette use.²

Illinois Middle and High School Student Tobacco Use Profile³



12.9% have **current asthma**.

22.3% of those with asthma had an **asthma attack** in the past year.

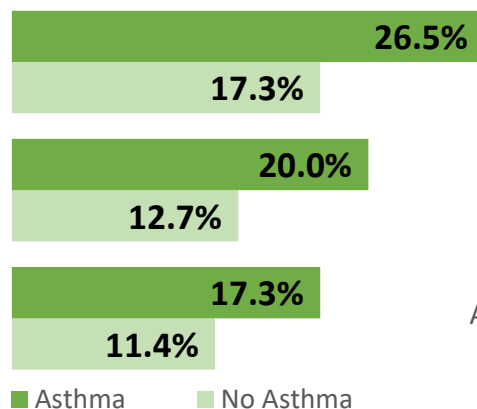


18.5% of students have **used any tobacco product** in the past month.

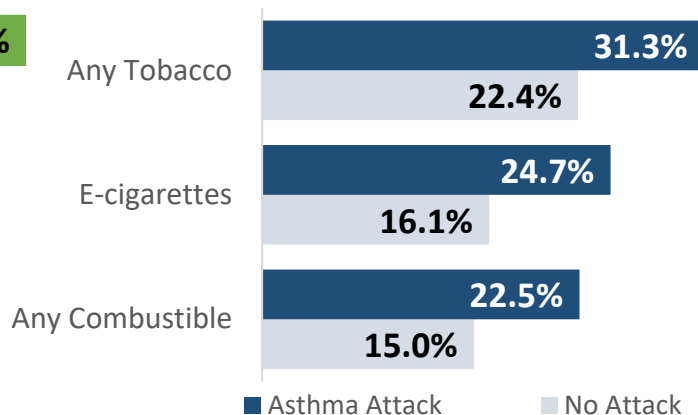
12.2% used **any combustible** product.

13.6% used **e-cigarettes**.

More students with asthma are using tobacco products compared to students without asthma.⁴



More students with asthma using tobacco are having asthma attacks compared to students with asthma who do not use tobacco.⁴



Not using any kind of tobacco protects students with asthma from having an asthma attack.⁵

What to do?

Talk to students with asthma

- Provide education on triggers, e-cigarettes, and harms from tobacco product use.
- Promote smoking cessation resources to students and their families.

Support policies which reduce youth access to tobacco products.

Definitions and sources on back page.

Created by the Asthma Program and Illinois Asthma Partnership Data and Surveillance Workgroup
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Definitions

Current asthma: defined by a positive response to “Has a doctor, nurse, or other health professional ever told you that you have asthma?” and to “Do you still have asthma?”

Any tobacco product: defined as use of any tobacco product (e-cigarettes, cigarettes, cloves cigarettes, cigars, smokeless tobacco, pipe tobacco, and/or bidis) on at least one day in the past 30 days.

Any combustible product: defined as use of cigarettes, cloves, cigars, pipe tobacco, and/or bidis on at least one day in the past 30 days.

Asthma attack: defined “During the past 12 months, have you had an episode of asthma or asthma attack?”

Sources

¹U.S. Federal Drug Administration, Youth E-cigarette Prevention Campaign Press Release, <https://www.fda.gov/NewsEvents/Newsroom/PressAnnouncements/ucm620788.htm>

² University of Illinois Urbana Champaign, Center for Prevention Research and Development, Illinois Youth Survey, 2018

³Illinois Youth Tobacco Survey, Illinois Department of Public Health, 2015

⁴Rao-Scott chi-square test; p value <0.05

⁵Based on an adjusted prevalence ratio; p value <0.05