

# ash.facts at a glance

action on smoking and health

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## Smoking statistics

### Adults

There are about **10 million adults** who smoke cigarettes in Great Britain:

- this is about a sixth of the total UK population
- 22% of adult men and 21% of adult women are smokers

Among **women**, smoking is **highest among 20-24 year olds** at 31%; among **men** the highest rate is among **25-34 year olds** of whom 30% smoke.

In 1974, 51% of men and 41% of women smoked cigarettes - nearly half the adult population.

More than half (58%) of all adults report that they have never smoked.

### Numbers who quit

**22% of women and 30% of men are now ex-smokers.** Surveys show that about two-thirds of current smokers would like to stop smoking.

### Deaths from smoking

**About half of all regular cigarette smokers will eventually be killed by their addiction.**

Every year, around **114,000 smokers in the UK die from smoking related causes.**

### Tobacco smoke contains

**Over 4,000 chemical compounds**, present as either gases or as tiny particles. These include carbon monoxide, arsenic, formaldehyde, cyanide, benzene, toluene and acrolein.

### Young people

**Two-thirds of smokers start before age 18.**

In England one in seven 15 year olds are regular smokers: 11% of boys and 17% of girls

It is illegal to sell cigarettes to any person under the age of 18.

### Regional smoking rates

**Smoking rates do not vary greatly** between different regions of England (defined by the Government Office of the Regions).

- In 2008, Yorkshire had the highest prevalence (25%) while London and the East of England had the lowest at 19%. The biggest drop in smoking between 2007 and 2008 - from 23% to 20% - occurred in the West Midlands.
- In England overall 21% of people smoke.
- In Scotland 24% of the population smoke.
- In Wales the rate is 21%.

**Smoking rates are markedly higher among poorer people.** In 2008, 14% of adults in managerial and professional occupations smoked compared with 29% in routine and manual occupations.

### Government revenue and expenditure

In 2008-09 the Government earned **£9,700 million** in revenue from tobacco tax (incl. VAT).

It spent £23.38m on education campaigns and £73.5m on helping people stop smoking.