

# SMOKERS AND QUITTING

California Department of Public Health  
California Tobacco Control Program  
[cdph.ca.gov/programs/Tobacco](http://cdph.ca.gov/programs/Tobacco)

## Desire to Quit

- Almost 75% of California smokers say they would like to stop smoking.

## Intention to Quit

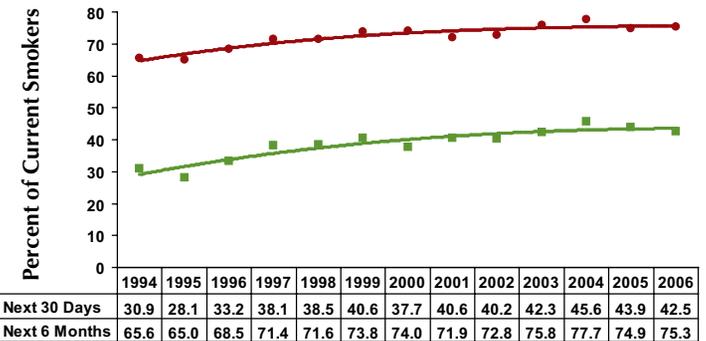
- Approximately 75% of California adult current smokers report that they are thinking about quitting within the next 6 months, and more than 40% report that they are thinking about quitting smoking within the next 30 days.
- The percentage of smokers who state that they are thinking about quitting within the next 30 days has increased since 1995. Similarly, the percentage of those who are thinking about quitting within the next 6 months has also increased. Both measures have remained stable since 2002.

## Cessation Assistance

- From 1997-2006, the percentage of smokers who used nicotine replacement therapy (patches, gum, or nasal spray) to assist in their quitting attempts approximately doubled from 11.4% to 22.6%.
- The use of self-help materials and counseling also increased by 62% and 73%, respectively, over the nine year period.
- Collectively, there has been a steady increase in the use of cessation assistance strategies, i.e. self-help materials, counseling advice, and/or nicotine replacement therapy. However, the majority (approximately 75%) of those making a quit attempt used no assistance.
- The California Smokers' Helpline, a toll-free telephone service (1-800-NO-BUTTS) has provided assistance to over 434,000 people since its inception in 1992 through July 2007. For more information visit [californiasmokershelpline.org](http://californiasmokershelpline.org).

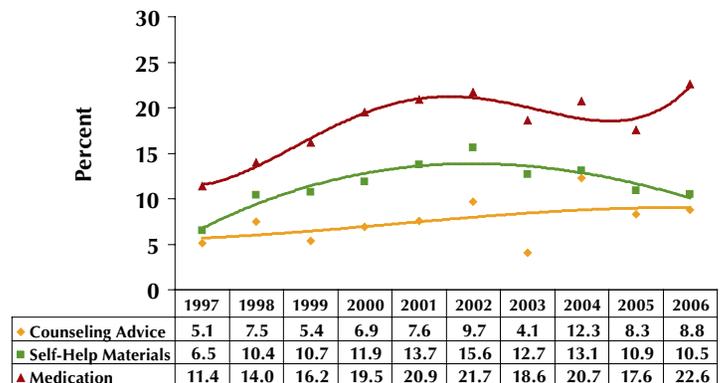
Smoking cessation is a complex and often extended process. It begins with an individual considering trying to quit and, in some cases, proceeds to repeat quit attempts until successful. In California, more smokers than ever are trying to quit because social norms have shifted away from the acceptability of smoking.<sup>1,2,3,4</sup> Moreover, smokers themselves have developed positive attitudes reflecting this change, such as those related to secondhand smoke and countering pro-tobacco influences. Data shows that smokers who support or agree with strategies to reduce secondhand smoke are two times more likely to have made a recent quit attempt or have intentions to quit in the next six months.<sup>5</sup> The increase in home smoking bans among smokers between 1996 and 2005 is also an indication of the social norm change. Research has shown that smokers are more likely to make a quit attempt and be successful if they have a home smoking ban in place.<sup>6,7</sup>

## Proportion of California Smokers Thinking About Quitting, 1994-2006



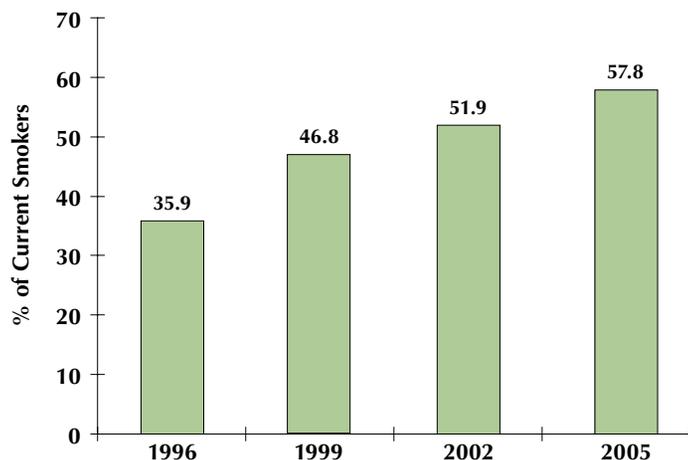
Sources: CATS/BRFS, 1994-2006, weighted to 2000 CA population.  
Prepared by: California Department of Public Health, California Tobacco Control Program, August 2007.

## Use of Cessation Assistance by California Smokers Trying to Quit, 1997-2006



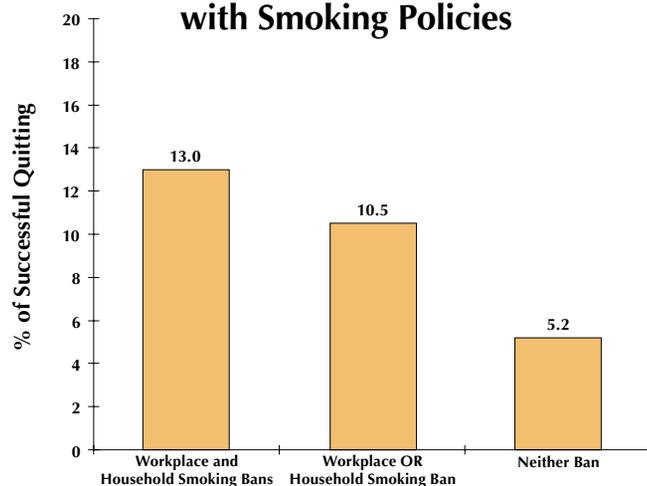
Source: Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) and California Adult Tobacco Survey (CATS) data is combined for 1997-2006. The data is weighted to the 2000 California population.  
Prepared by: California Department of Public Health, California Tobacco Control Program, August 2007.

## Percentage of Current Smokers Who Have a Complete Smoke-Free Home Policy, 1996-2005



Source: California Tobacco Survey (CTS) 1996, 1999, 2002, and 2005. Prepared by California Department of Public Health, California Tobacco Control Program, August 2007.

## Percentage of Successful Quitters\* with Smoking Policies



\* A successful quitter is defined as a smoker who smoked 12 months prior to the survey being conducted but was not smoking at the time of the interview. Source: California Tobacco Survey (CTS) 2005. Prepared by California Department of Public Health, California Tobacco Control Program, August 2007.

## Quitting and Social Norm Changes

- Social norm changes regarding smoking policies in the workplace and at home have significantly impacted the smoking and quitting status of Californians.
- The percentage of current smokers that adopted a home smoking ban increased by two-thirds from 36% to 58% between 1996 and 2005, which primes the environment for smokers to quit.
- In 2005, successful quitters were more likely to have a workplace and/or household smoking ban (13% and 11%) compared to those who had no ban (5%).

## Health Benefits of Cessation

- Quitting cigarette smoking earlier reduces one's risk of dying. Research has found that quitting at age 50 could cut the risk of dying by half and if cessation occurs at age 30 or younger, the risk is almost entirely avoided.<sup>8</sup>
- Quitting smoking can also increase one's life expectancy. A smoker who quits smoking at age 60, 50, 40, or 30 can gain 3, 6, 9, or 10 more years of life, respectively.<sup>8</sup>

## About the Surveys

The Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) (1984-present) and the California Adult Tobacco Survey (CATS) (1993-present) are random-digit-dial telephone surveys of 8,000 adults conducted annually by the Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing (CATI) Unit of the Cancer Surveillance Section of the California Department of Public Health (CDPH). Data has been weighted to the 2000 California population using gender, four (4) race groups and two (2) age groups.

The California Tobacco Survey (CTS) (1990, 1992-1993, 1996, 1999, 2002, and 2005), is funded by the California Tobacco Control Program (CTCP) of the California Department of Public Health (CDPH), and is conducted by the Cancer Prevention and Control program of the University

of California, San Diego. The California Tobacco Survey is a very large-scale telephone survey that includes a screener survey, an adult extended survey and a youth survey.

## References:

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8. Doll R; Peto R; Boreham J; Sutherland I. (2004) Mortality in relation to smoking: 50 years' observations on male British doctors. *Br Med J* 328(7455): 1507.

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