



**TOBACCO  
CONTROL  
STRATEGIES**

**FOR MISSISSIPPIANS  
WITH DISABILITIES**

- ▶ Illicit Drug Use
- ▶ Disorders Among Young Adults and Their Substance Use
- ▶ Higher Prevalence Among People with Disabilities
- ▶ Marketing to the Quitter



**INSTITUTE FOR DISABILITY STUDIES**  
THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN MISSISSIPPI

**4th Quarter June 2021**

# TCS News

Tobacco Cessation Information for All Mississippians, Including People with Disabilities

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## Illicit Drug Use

Overall, college students with any disability reported higher levels of drug use than their counterparts without a disability, including over-use and past-year use of illicit drugs (40.2% vs. 30.6% for past-year use, respectively;  $p < 0.0001$ ), and a significantly higher prevalence of current use of marijuana (20.1% vs. 15.7%) and cocaine (2.3% vs. 1.2%). Less than one percent of students without a disability had ever used heroin while 2.5% of students with any disability reported using the drug ( $p < 0.01$ ). Disabled students also reported higher levels of over misuse, past-year misuse, or current misuse of prescription pain relievers, OxyContin, tranquilizers, sedatives, and other psychotherapeutics.

## Disorders Among Young Adults and Their Substance Use



There are approximately 20 million students enrolled in colleges and universities in the United States. In the 2018 fall semester, approximately 85% (17 million) of college students enrolled in undergraduate programs and about 15% in graduate programs. While estimates vary, research suggests that a significant number of those students have some form of disability. The U.S. Department of Education estimates that 11% of undergraduate and 5% of post-baccalaureate students have a disability. This is compared to approximately 20% of adults in the general U.S. population as estimated by the U.S. census. Estimates are substantially higher from the American College Health Association - National College Health Assessment II (ACHA-NCHA II), which uses a broader definition of disability, including psychiatric disorders, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), attention deficit disorder (ADD), learning disabilities, and chronic illnesses (e.g., cancer, diabetes, autoimmune disorders). Under this definition, more than half (54%) of students surveyed in 2016 reported a diagnosis or treatment of one or more disabilities by a professional within the past year.

Young adults have the highest prevalence of substance use of any age group. The prevalence of substance dependence or abuse in the past year among adults aged 18 to 25 is higher than that among youths aged 12 to 17 and adults aged 26 or older. Like many young adults, college students with disabilities have an elevated risk of substance use. In 2015, annual prevalence of illicit drug use among college students was 41%. While marijuana is the most widely used illicit drug, with one fifth of students reporting past-month use, and 5% using marijuana daily, annual prevalence of any illicit drug use other than marijuana is 19%. The popularity of marijuana, and the increasing availability through legalization, have contributed to the rise in drug use among college students. Additionally, there has been an increase in nonmedical use of prescription medications, with approximately 20% of college students reporting nonmedical use of at least one prescription medication in their lifetime. Three percent of college students report past-year use of non-heroin narcotics, primarily Vicodin and OxyContin. Moreover, the annual prevalence of any amphetamine use (e.g., Adderall and Ritalin) is 10% for college students. Although prescribed to treat ADHD, these drugs are often misused by college students to stay alert and study for exams.

*Continued*



There is a small but growing body of research on the association between ADHD and substance use disorders. Findings from these studies suggest adolescents and young adults with ADHD are more likely to become dependent upon or abuse nicotine, alcohol, marijuana, cocaine, or other substances. Similar results are found in small studies of college students with learning disabilities. According to one study, approximately one-third of all adolescents with mental illness have become regular alcohol drinkers or have used illicit drugs by the age of 18.

By age 18, the majority of adolescents with pre-existing mental disorders had consumed alcohol at least once and had reported having the opportunity to use drugs. Furthermore, adolescents with mental disorders also had high lifetime rates of both alcohol and illicit drug abuse.

According to ACHA, 5% of students had chronic illnesses (e.g., cancer, diabetes, autoimmune disorders), 4% had a learning disability, and 9% had other disabilities such as hearing and vision impairments, mobility/dexterity, and speech or language disorders. Examples of research on this topic are few and include a study that found college students with ADHD and learning disabilities reported significantly more substance use than their counterparts without disabilities. Another study of college students with ADHD concluded that such students were nearly four times as likely to have ever used tobacco and report alcohol dependence. They were also three times more likely to have ever used marijuana and approximately five times more likely to use illicit drugs other than marijuana.

**References:**

<https://www.rwjbh.org/documents/csh/Tobacco-use-disparities-and-disability-among-US-college-students.pdf>

<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1936657420300741>

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4983463/>

## Higher Prevalence Among People with Disabilities

People with disabilities have consistently higher prevalence of current tobacco smoking than people without disabilities. As with many other substances, this disparity in tobacco use is attributed to the strong association between psychiatric disorders and substance use. For instance, individuals with mental illness have significantly higher rates of current smoking, smoke a greater number of cig-

arettes a day, have fewer quit attempts, and are less successful at quitting.

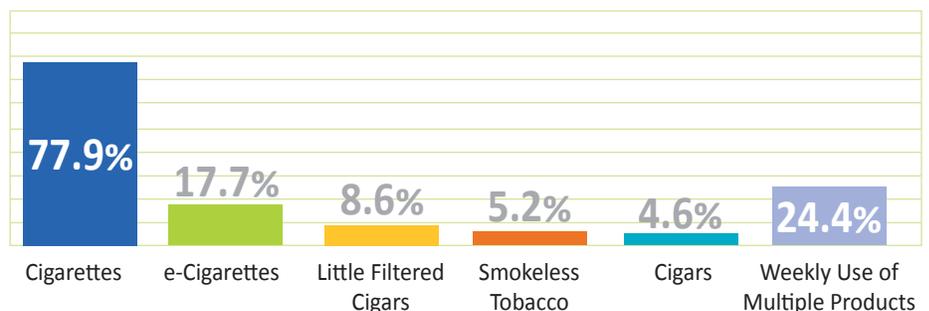
Nicotine use disorder has been positively associated with several psychiatric conditions such as panic disorders, clinical depression, borderline personality disorder, bipolar disorders, generalized anxiety, and posttraumatic stress disorder.

## Marketing to the Quitter

In a study, conducted between May 2014 and February 2015, people were chosen in a random sample from the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) Clinical Trials Network (CTN) to explore the use of tobacco products in relationship to the exposure to marketing of individuals in addiction treatment programs. It was found that cigarette use was 77.9%. Other products used included e-cigarettes 17.7%, little filtered cigars 8.6%, smokeless tobacco 5.2%, and standard cigars 4.6%. It was also found that 24.4%

used multiple tobacco products at one time. Through this study, it was concluded that the prevalence of smoking was very high among persons in drug treatment programs, e-cigarettes are widely used among this population, individuals in drug treatment programs use multiple types of tobacco products possibly to quit smoking, tobacco products did not prove to be effective cessation tools, and regulation of tobacco products should prohibit marketing as cessation aids.

## Weekly Use of Tobacco Products



 **UMMC**  
ACT Center for Tobacco Treatment,  
Education and Research  
601.815.1180 act2quit.org

**Mississippi  
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**1.800.QUITNOW**  
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