

TOBACCO USE AND CESSATION: BRAZIL

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OVERVIEW

Brazil is the second largest producer of tobacco in the world.¹ Regardless of business interests, the Brazilian government has established tobacco cessation as a health priority. To that end, it offers a quitline and treatment options through its Unique Health System (SUS), Brazil's decentralized public healthcare system.¹

There has been a recent surge in anti-tobacco policies and tobaccos cessation treatments.² The Centre for Studies on Tobacco and Health (CETAB) was created to combat the tobacco and its risk factors.³ It has spearhead a number of legislative and regulatory changes to curb the prevalence of smoking and tobacco use, including:

- Passed laws creating smoke-free environments in the workplace and public places;
- Created tobacco dependency treatment options;
- Required health warning labels about the dangers of tobacco on cigarette packages; and
- Enforced bans on tobacco advertising, promotion and sponsorship in magazines or commercials.⁴

According to a recent report, Brazil is ranked among the highest achieving countries in its tobacco cessation efforts.

PREVALENCE OF TOBACCO USE

Cigarettes are the preferred source of tobacco consumption among Brazilians.¹ In 2011, about 14.8% of Brazilian adults use tobacco.⁵

In Brazil, more females (18.2%) than males (16.5%) use tobacco.⁵ In recent years, tobacco use among Brazilian women has increased. This may be because there is greater social acceptance of smoking among women and tobacco companies' marketing initiatives targeting women.⁶ Women tend to start smoking later in life than men.⁶ As such, the health effects of tobacco use are just beginning to manifest among women in Brazil.⁶

One study of Brazilian youth aged 13 to 15 does show a potentially shrinking gender gap: 7.9% of boys and 7.3% of girls use tobacco.⁷

COST OF TOBACCO USE

Rising health care costs are a top concern of companies in Brazil. In 2012, the average medical trend rate was 12.69% and is expected to rise to 14.0% by 2014.⁸

Currently, the cost of caring for smokers in Brazil is about \$10 billion a year.⁹

TOBACCO-RELATED HEALTH INFORMATION

Over five million deaths in Brazil each year are due to smoking and about 600,000 die are related to second hand smoking.¹⁰ Cardiovascular diseases and cancer are the most common causes of tobacco-related death.¹⁰ These include:

- 45% of all heart attack deaths¹¹
- 85% of all emphysema deaths¹¹
- 25% of all stroke deaths¹¹
- 30% of all cancer deaths¹¹

Between 1996 and 2005, 1 million hospitalizations were attributed to smoking-related illnesses.¹¹

TOBACCO USE IN THE WORKPLACE

On December 15, 2011, Brazil passed a law “smokefree measure for all enclosed workplaces and public places,” in other words, smoking was banned in all shared enclosed spaces.¹²

Brazil is beginning to implement laws and policies to promote tobacco cessation.¹³ Although six Brazilian states have passed comprehensive smoking bans in public places, no national smoking ban exists.¹³ Brazil was the first country to prohibit the tobacco industry from using misleading advertisements.¹³ Brazilian cigarettes are sold with graphic warning labels.¹³

Employers are taking measures to restrict smoking in the workplace and reduce employee tobacco use within their workforce.⁶ Estimates are that 24% of Brazilians are exposed to secondhand smoke at work.¹³ [The National Tobacco Control Program's Smoke-Free Workplace Program](#) provides employers with educational, regulatory and policy tools to encourage changes in their company culture to reduce tobacco use. These actions include:

- Disseminating information on tobacco-related health risks, including secondhand smoke⁶
- Restricting smoking in the workplace⁶
- Training occupational health professionals on tobacco cessation for employees⁶

Brazil ratified the World Health Organization Framework Convention on Tobacco Control in 2005.⁴ Nationally, Brazil celebrates two tobacco control days: World No Tobacco Day (May 31) and National Day to Fight

Smoking (August 29). The Brazilian National Cancer Institute (INCA) disseminates and promotes tobacco control resources on both days.⁶

TOBACCO CESSATION TREATMENT OPTIONS

Treatment options in Brazil include nicotine replacement products, non-nicotine medications and quitlines. The Ministry of Health's Ordinance 1575 created a national, publicly-funded tobacco cessation program.⁶ Treatment is provided through Unique Health System (SUS), Brazil's decentralized public health care system.¹ Brazil offers free smoking cessation treatment, including brief counseling by a health care professional and pharmaceutical treatment (e.g., nicotine replacement therapy and bupropion).¹ Between 2004 and 2006, 22 of 27 Brazilian states helped around 50,000 smokers try to quit, of whom about 45% used medications and about 40% remained abstinent after four weeks.⁶ Brazil also sponsors a quitline; its telephone number must be printed on health warnings for all tobacco products and on advertisements at retail outlets.¹

RESOURCES

- [WHO Report on the Global Tobacco Epidemic, 2008](#)
- [WHO Report on the Global Tobacco Epidemic, 2009](#)
- [WHO Report on the Global Tobacco Epidemic, 2013](#)
- [Brazilian Ministry of Health, Tobacco Control](#)
- [Smoke Free Guide - Portuguese](#) Note: This is a translation of the U.K.'s NHS Smoke Free Guide; English version is available at http://smokefree.nhs.uk/downloads/108281_main_guide_double.pdf
- [Tobacco Control Program for Businesses](#)

CITATIONS

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