

Louisiana ranks 45th in the nation for adult smoking, with 15.7% of adults smoking—well above the national average of 12.1%, according to the 2024 [America's Health Rankings Report](#). Smoking is the leading cause of preventable death in the U.S., causing over 480,000 deaths each year. It harms nearly every organ and is linked to heart disease, stroke, cancer, diabetes, and serious lung problems.

Some groups are more likely to smoke than others including men, middle-aged adults, rural residents, and people with lower income or education. Adults without a high school diploma are over four times more likely to smoke than college graduates. Those earning under \$25,000 are about three times more likely to smoke than people earning over \$75,000. These patterns show why it is important to understand the bigger reasons behind people's health choices and outcomes.

The Rise of Vaping

In 2021, the FDA approved e-cigarettes to help adults quit traditional smoking. While vaping may reduce exposure to some harmful chemicals, it has created new problems—especially for teens. Nicotine can impair brain development in young people and lead to problems with memory, attention, and behavior. Additionally, teens who vape are more likely to start smoking cigarettes later, which adds to nicotine addiction.

Why Quitting Matters

Quitting smoking has both immediate and long-term health benefits. Within minutes, the heart rate and blood pressure begin to drop. Over time, lung function improves, and the risk of serious diseases goes down. Even long-time smokers can live longer and healthier lives by quitting. People who stop smoking before age 40 can live about 10 years longer than those who keep smoking.



Help Is Available

Ochsner offers a successful [smoking cessation program](#), with a quit rate 3 times better than the national average. The program includes counseling from certified tobacco treatment specialists, access to medication, and continuous support, with follow-ups extending up to a year post-quit date.

Lindsey White, Director, Ochsner's Tobacco Cessation Program shares "On average it takes 9-12 times to quit for good. Ochsner Smoking Cessation's team is here to support you through your journey to become a healthier you". Eligibility for the program is broad, encompassing

Louisiana and Mississippi residents over 18 who are ready to quit smoking or vaping.

The [Tobacco Control & Prevention Program](#) also works with various groups during national events like [Take Down Tobacco Day](#) and [No World Tobacco Day](#) in May.

A Healthier Future

By educating the public, offering support, and creating healthier spaces, communities can help more people quit smoking and live longer, healthier lives.

Smoking Rates

15.7%

of Louisiana Adults
Smoke

12.1%

U.S. Average



To find out more about Ochsner Health's Smoking Cessation Program. Scan the QR code:



The Ochsner-Xavier Institute for Health Equity and Research (OXIHER) regularly shines a light on some of the most critical health needs affecting the communities we serve. OXIHER works in alignment with Healthy State to develop effective strategies to address and improve overall population health.