

# THE IMPACT OF TOBACCO USE IN OREGON



Tobacco use continues to be one of the most public health challenges facing Oregon. Each year, it takes the lives of thousands and leaves many more living with long-term illnesses. Tobacco use harms those who use it and affects entire communities—driving up healthcare costs, straining public resources, and deepening health disparities across the state.

The impact of tobacco use has changed over time. While cigarette smoking has declined, new products and aggressive marketing have taken its place. Today, flavored tobacco, e-cigarette devices, and limited access to care continue to drive tobacco use—especially among youth and in communities already facing systemic barriers.

## DEATH AND ILLNESS

**8,000+ DEATHS ANNUALLY**

Long-term tobacco use contributes to chronic conditions such as COPD, asthma, and cardiovascular disease. These illnesses are more common in communities with limited access to healthcare and in places where tobacco marketing and retailer density are higher, making tobacco products more visible and accessible.



## ECONOMIC IMPACT

**\$5.7 BILLION IN ANNUAL COSTS**



Tobacco use places a major financial burden on Oregon's healthcare system and economy. Costs include hospitalizations, treatment, medications, and lost productivity from illness and early death. Communities with fewer resources often experience higher tobacco use and bear a greater share of these financial impacts.

## MENTAL HEALTH

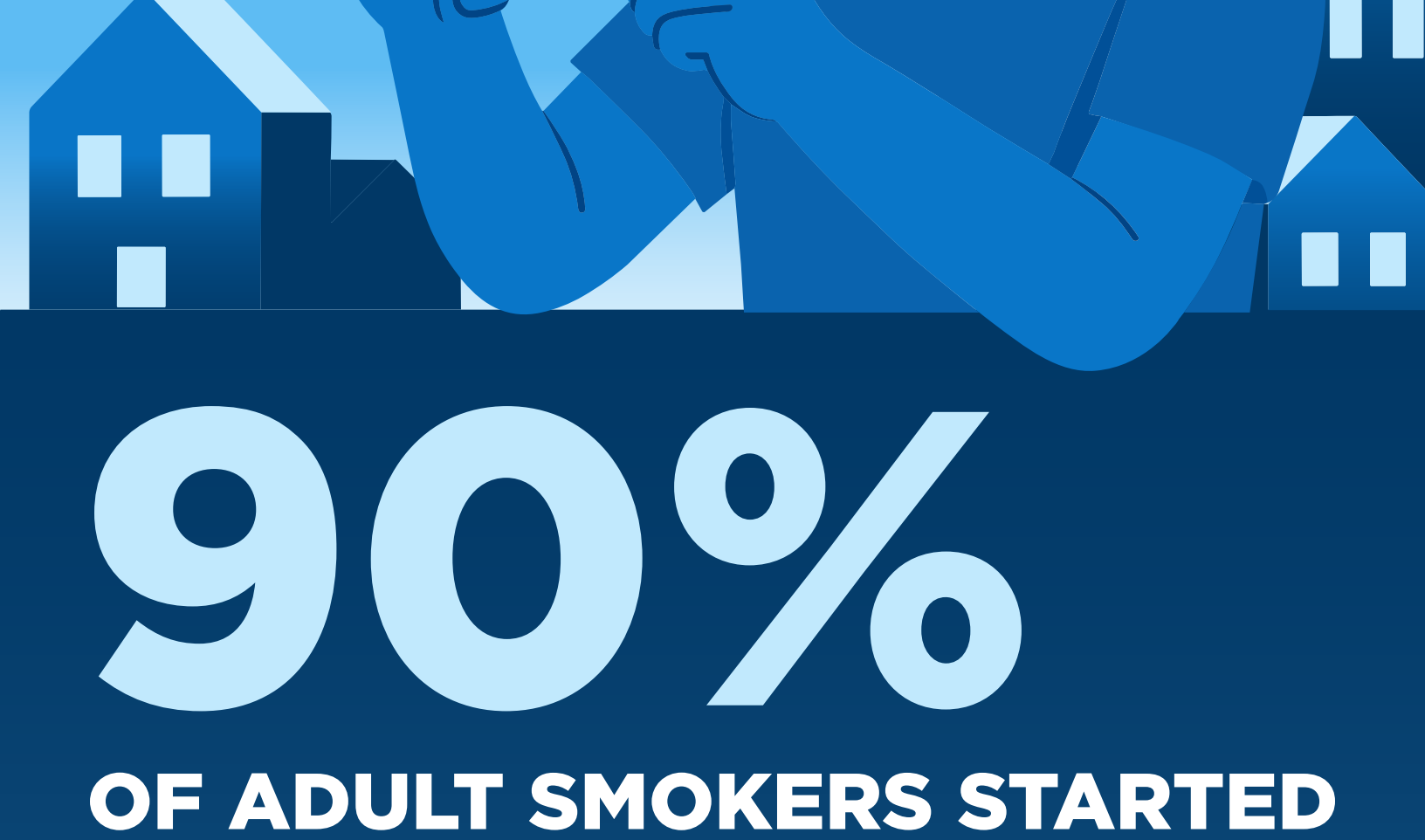
**1 IN 4 OREGONIANS WITH POOR MENTAL HEALTH USE TOBACCO**

People experiencing mental health conditions like depression and anxiety have significantly higher rates of tobacco use. This pattern is influenced by a range of factors, including targeted tobacco marketing, chronic stress, and the ongoing lack of treatment for both mental health and tobacco dependence. Rather than improving symptoms, tobacco use often leads to worsened health outcomes and creates additional barriers to recovery.



## EARLY INITIATION

Youth are particularly vulnerable to nicotine addiction. Early use is often driven by exposure to flavored tobacco products, targeted advertising, and peer influence. These factors increase the likelihood of long-term use and make quitting more difficult later in life.



**90%**

**OF ADULT SMOKERS STARTED BEFORE AGE 18**

**ADULT TOBACCO USE**

**22.4%**

**OF OREGON ADULTS CURRENTLY USE TOBACCO PRODUCTS**

Tobacco use remains a significant concern among Oregon adults. Rates are higher in communities facing economic hardship and limited access to support services for quitting.

Cigarettes remain the most commonly used tobacco product among adults. However, the widespread availability of flavored products, along with ongoing marketing and visibility, continues to reinforce tobacco use and make quitting more difficult.



## YOUTH TOBACCO USE

**12.8%**

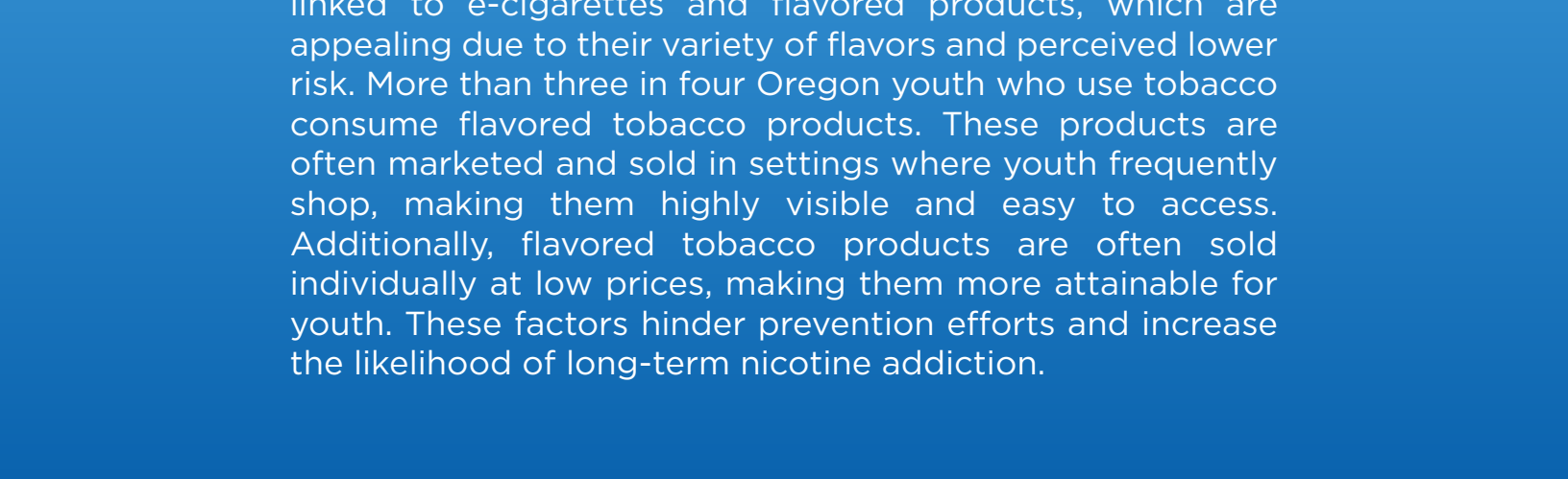
**OF 11TH GRADERS**

**AND**

**5.9%**

**OF 8TH GRADERS**

**CURRENTLY USE TOBACCO**



Tobacco use among Oregon youth remains a significant concern. The majority of youth tobacco use is primarily linked to e-cigarettes and flavored products, which are appealing due to their variety of flavors and perceived lower risk. More than three in four Oregon youth who use tobacco consume flavored tobacco products. These products are often marketed and sold in settings where youth frequently shop, making them highly visible and easy to access. Additionally, flavored tobacco products are often sold individually at low prices, making them more attainable for youth. These factors hinder prevention efforts and increase the likelihood of long-term nicotine addiction.