

Tobacco use up during early COVID-19 lockdown

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(HealthDay)—Existing smokers or users of electronic nicotine delivery

systems (ENDS) report increased use during the initial COVID-19 lockdown, according to a study published online March 1 in the *International Journal of Drug Policy*.

Daniel P. Giovenco, Ph.D., from Columbia University in New York City, and colleagues conducted semistructured telephone interviews with 44 adults who use cigarettes and/or ENDS.

The researchers found that nearly all participants reported changes in their product use during lockdown. Although patterns varied, increased use was the most common pattern and was predominantly driven by individual-level factors, including pandemic-related anxiety, boredom, and irregular routines. Social users reported decreased use, citing fewer interpersonal interactions and fear of sharing products. Cigarettes remained universally accessible, while ENDS access was more limited, driving some users to purchase products online. Some ENDS users reported compensating for delayed deliveries with readily available cigarettes.

"Pandemic response policies that intentionally or inadvertently restrict access to lower risk products—through availability, supply chains, or even postal service slowdowns—while leaving more harmful products widely accessible may have unintended consequences that should be considered during [policy](#) development," Giovenco said in a statement.

More information: [Abstract/Full Text \(subscription or payment may be required\)](#)

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