Abstract

This research explored the relationship between age and type of tobacco used at tobacco initiation with current tobacco use among Alaska Native (AN) adults ($n=290$) from southwest Alaska. Tobacco initiation occurred at a young age ($M=11.8$ years old) in this study sample. The results indicated that about half of those who initiated tobacco use with smokeless tobacco (ST) switched to cigarette use. It was found that those who initiated tobacco use with ST were more likely to be current ST users and those who initiated with cigarettes were more likely to be current cigarette users ($p<0.01$). Based on the study findings, three recommendations are: (1) that prevention and intervention efforts be targeted at AN youth; (2) that stricter enforcement of current tobacco policies, laws, and rules be undertaken; and (3) that studies be conducted to evaluate and address how tobacco is accessed among AN youth and how this may be related to patterns of tobacco use in this population.