



## SMOKING AND HEALTH PROMOTION: CHALLENGES TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF EFFECTIVE STRATEGIES

### *Tabagismo e promoção da saúde: desafios para o desenvolvimento de estratégias efetivas*

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Smoking is regarded as the leading cause of preventable death worldwide<sup>(1)</sup> and is the main responsible for the onset of Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD), which is currently considered the second leading cause of death across the globe, according to a recent study published in the prominent journal Lancet<sup>(2)</sup>.

In this study<sup>(2)</sup>, a 24.2 percent increase in COPD death rates was evidenced between 2005 and 2016, even though, according to previous predictions, there was an estimate that this illness would be the third-leading cause of death only by the year 2030. Moreover, the prevalence and morbidity of the disease are still considered underestimated, since the diagnosis is most of the times made when it is already clinically apparent or moderately advanced, resulting in high morbidity and mortality rates and major economic and social impact<sup>(3,4)</sup>.

Such fact occurs because the onset of smoking-related chronic lung diseases only takes place after a long period of cigarette smoking, which renders this risk factor, even in the present days, regarded as the great challenge to the creation of efficient and effective strategies of health prevention and promotion.

In this context, the present issue of the Brazilian Journal in Health Promotion has published three original articles related to the topic of smoking in different contexts of Community Health; the main findings of these surveys focus on the many emotional, psychic, physical and social repercussions associated with smoking.

One of the studies<sup>(5)</sup> evaluated the use of tobacco by academics of a program in the health area of a Brazilian higher education institution and verified a low prevalence of smoking among the students. However, it was found that students living with parents or relatives had a higher prevalence of smoking compared to those who live alone.

This fact prompts reflection on the extent to which the family can (or not) influence cigarette consumption and the extent to which the university environment is a place (or should be) for implementing health promotion and prevention strategies, which may have contributed to the low prevalence found in the study.

On the other hand, other study<sup>(6)</sup> was intended to evaluate the factors associated with smoking in patients who underwent bariatric surgery, with a significant prevalence of tobacco consumption in this population and found association with sociodemographic variables, comorbidities, depression symptoms, psychological distress, sleep disorders and religiosity.

These findings bring to light the importance of implementing health promotion strategies aimed at due attention to smoking in clinical situations involving the postoperative period of major surgical procedures, such as bariatric surgery, thus evidencing that the patients submitted to such intervention need proper multidimensional management aiming at minimizing the deleterious effects caused by the cigarette.

Finally, another article in this issue<sup>(7)</sup> evaluated the association between emotional factors and smoking habit in participants in a smoking cessation program. A total of 173 patients were evaluated and the main findings of the study point to a correlation between anxiety and depression symptoms and a greater degree of nicotine dependence, thus reinforcing the understanding that smoking is closely related to emotional factors.

The findings of the aforementioned studies bring to the scientific community, and to the overall society, that there are numerous challenges to be addressed in the management of health promotion and prevention strategies in smokers.

These strategies should be widely discussed by academia, professionals and public/private health managers, in order to be implemented at all levels of the healthcare system, aiming at an adequate success rate of smoking cessation and reduction related to its consumption. In this sense, the Brazilian Journal in Health Promotion monitors, discloses and discusses the actualization of this strategic care in its publications.



## REFERENCES

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