

Jefferson Cardiology Association Happenings

50 Year Trends in Smoking Mortality

In the January 24th issue of the *New England Journal of Medicine*, two major studies reported on the risks of smoking and the benefits of smoking cessation. One study evaluated trends in mortality over three time periods including 1959-1965, 1982-1988, and 2000-2010. This study looked at people who became 55 years old or older during the follow-up study. Death rates and the relative risk of smoking were studied during these three time periods. A major question was whether the risks for smoking in women approached the risks for men. Relatively few women smoked before World War II. The landmark US Surgeon General's report in 1964 concluded that cigarette smoking is causally related to cancer in men.

Among persons who never smoked, the death rates from any cause were 50% greater in the most recent period studied compared to the 1959-1965 period for both sexes. It was seen that the risk for death from all causes among current smokers increased in all periods compared with those who never smoked.

Among participants who never smoked, the rate of death from lung cancer remained constant for men and slightly increased for women from 1959-1965 to 1982-1988 before decreasing in the most current generation. However, female smokers demonstrated a 16.8 fold increase in death from lung cancer over the 50 year period. Male smokers demonstrated a rate of death to lung cancer that was 12 times nonsmokers. Significantly, in the 2000-2010 group, the risk of death for men and women smokers

was virtually the same compared to nonsmokers.

With regard to chronic obstructive lung disease, COPD, the rate of death among nonsmoking women remained the same over the study period with a 45% reduction in death rates in male nonsmokers in the 2000-2010 era. However, the mortality for both men and women smokers increased over all three periods.

With regard to cardiovascular disease, the combined rates of death from all types of heart disease and stroke fell by 78% in women and 74% in men. Much smaller decreases were seen in current smokers resulting in an increased relative risk with smoking.

The risks of death from lung cancer, COPD, cardiovascular disease, and any cause increased according to the number of cigarettes smoked daily and the number of years smoking. The risk for death among nonsmokers of both sexes decreased over time but rates of lung cancer and COPD rose in women. Those who quit at an earlier age had less risk for cancer and COPD. Those who stopped smoking before the age of 60 had a lower risk than those smoking fewer than 10 cigarettes per day.

In conclusion, it was noted that the risk of dying from cigarettes is now identical for men and women. For men 55-74 and women 60-74 the rate of death from all causes is now three times that of those who never smoked. The rate of death for COPD among smokers continues to rise and has decreased in men who never smoked. Quitting smoking at any age reduces the risk of mortality. Those who cut down their cigarette

consumption still remain at higher risk than those who stopped.

Benefits of Cigarette Cessation

To evaluate the benefits of cigarette cessation, a group of 113,000 women and 88,000 men, 25 years or older, was interviewed between 1997 and 2004. Ratios for death among current smokers and lifelong smokers were compared.

For participants 25-79 the rate of death from any cause was three times higher among smokers compared to those who never smoked. The excess mortality was due to cancer, cardiovascular and respiratory disease. The probability of surviving from 25-79 years of age was twice as great among lifelong nonsmokers compared to smokers. Life expectancy was shortened by more than 10 years among current smokers compared to those who never smoked. Adults who quit smoking at 25-34, 35-44, or 45-54 years of age gained 10, 9 and 6 years of life respectively.

In short, smokers lose one decade of life compared to those who never smoked. Those who stop smoking before age 40 reduce the risk of death associated with continued smoking by 90%.

Cigarette Cessation

Are you having trouble stopping smoking? Did you know that smokers who try to stop smoking using telephone support and self help advice are twice as likely to stop smoking? The Pennsylvania Department of Health has created the

Pennsylvania Free Quitline. Similar hotlines have been established in other states.

Pennsylvania Free QuitLine 1-877-724-1090

The hotline is staffed by trained tobacco cessation counselors for both phone counseling and self help cessation materials. This line offers free individual counseling 24/7. Discounts are available on nicotine replacement products. Information is available about local programs. Call when you feel the need to smoke.

UPMC McKeesport Hospital offers free group classes and free nicotine replacement products for those enrolled and do not have insurance coverage. Their phone number is 412-664-2114.

Staff News

We would like to wish a very Happy Birthday to our employees celebrating this month, Mary Banaszak and Joanne Bondi who are both again celebrating their 21st birthday! ☺

Happy Valentine's Day

Happy Valentine's Day to you and your loved ones from all of us at Jefferson Cardiology.



A publication of Jefferson Cardiology Association

Alan D. Bramowitz, M.D. Peter M. Lemis, M.D. Michael S. Nathanson, M.D. Gennady Geskin, M.D.

Jefferson Hospital Medical Building
Suite 403, Coal Valley Road
P.O. Box 18285
Pittsburgh, PA 15236
TEL : (412) 469-1500
FAX : (412) 469-1531

Belle Vernon Office
1533 Broad Street Ext
Suite 200
Belle Vernon, Pa 15012
TEL : (412) 469-1500

E-mail: Jeffcrd@aol.com

<http://www.Jeffersoncardiology.com>