

News & Notes

Women Have More Difficulty Quitting, Study Shows

Women tend to become more psychologically dependent on smoking than men, which may explain why they have a harder time quitting, according to a study by the Virginia Commonwealth University's Institute for Drug and Alcohol Studies. "The data suggest that the relief from withdrawal symptoms provided by cigarettes may be more profound for women who smoke than men," said Thomas Eissenberg, lead author of the study.

One reason women may have more difficulty quitting smoking than men may be that current treatments have not emphasized the importance of the withdrawal relief that a cigarette provides to the smoker. If women are less dependent on nicotine, effective treatment for women smokers may need to focus on other factors in addition to nicotine dependence.

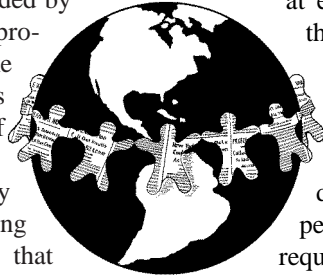
The researchers studied 38 men and 30 women and rated their desire to smoke, their cravings for a cigarette and their relief from withdrawal symptoms, such as restlessness and difficulty concentrating. The study is published in the journal *Nicotine and Tobacco Research*.

Sources: *Philadelphia Daily News* (12/20/99) *Medical Tribune*, (12/20/99) Rebecca Jerman© 1999 *Medical PressCorps News Service*

Medical Schools Fail to Train Students in Cessation

US medical school graduates are unprepared to help patients quit smoking, according to a study in today's *Journal of the American Medical Association* (JAMA). Even though the National Cancer Institute recommended mandatory cessation training at every US school in 1992, the study found that 32 out of 102 schools dedicated an average of less than one hour of classroom time per year to tobacco dependence. Almost 70 percent of the schools do not require any tobacco treatment training in the third and fourth year of school, the time when students learn to apply their medical knowledge to patients. Only three schools reported having a required course on tobacco education in the third and fourth years. "The public health community is active and aggressive in anti-smoking efforts, but there's nothing innovative going on at medical schools," said Dr. Linda Ferry, Director of Preventive Medicine at Lorna Linda University of Medicine. "It starts right at the ground level in medical school."

Sources: Andrew Buchanan, "Study: MDs Should Help Smokers Quit," *Associated Press*, August 31, 1999; "Training Doctors On Smoking Cessation," *Washington Post*, September 1, 1999, pA4



The Nicotine Challenger

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The *Addressing Tobacco Project*, a statewide project of UMDNJ-School of Public Health, helps substance abuse treatment programs deal with tobacco issues and nicotine dependence. The project is funded by a grant from the New Jersey Department of Health and Senior Services, Division of Addiction Services.

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