



Celebrating Cessation

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Tobacco Cessation Program

Iowa/Nebraska Primary Care Association

Newsletter Spotlight

One Drug May Help People Both Lay Down The Drink And Put Out The Cigarette

A popular smoking cessation drug dramatically reduced the amount a heavy drinker will consume, a new Yale School of Medicine study has found. Heavy-drinking smokers in a laboratory setting were much less likely to drink after taking the drug varenicline (Chantix) compared to those taking a placebo, according to a study published online in the journal *Biological Psychiatry*.

The group taking varenicline, sold as a stop-smoking aid under the name Chantix, reported feeling fewer cravings for alcohol and less intoxicated when they did drink. They were also much more likely to remain abstinent after being offered drinks than those who received a placebo, the study found.

Additionally, there were no adverse effects associated with combining varenicline with alcohol in the doses studied. When combined with low doses of alcohol, varenicline did not change blood pressure or heart rate, nor did it seem to induce nausea or dizziness.

"We anticipate that the results of this preliminary study will trigger clinical trials of varenicline as a primary treatment for alcohol use disorders, and as a potential dual treatment for alcohol and tobacco use disorders," said Sherry McKee, associate professor of psychiatry at the Yale School of Medicine and lead author of the study.

Smokers are more likely to drink alcohol and to consume greater quantities of alcohol, and they are four times more likely to meet criteria for alcohol use disorders. Diseases related to tobacco use are the leading causes of death in alcoholics.

"A medication such as varenicline, which may target shared biological systems in alcohol and nicotine use, holds promise as a treatment for individuals with both disorders" according to McKee.

McKee said that 80 percent of participants receiving varenicline did not take a drink at all, compared to 30 percent of the placebo group. The findings suggest that varenicline has the potential to be at least as effective in reducing drinking as naltrexone, another drug found to reduce alcohol consumption in heavy drinkers.

Source: Yale University (2009, March 4). One Drug May Help People Both Lay Down The Drink And Put Out The Cigarette. *ScienceDaily* Retrieved May 20, 2009, from <http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2009/03/090302120100.htm>

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

Tobacco Lead Meeting

When:
6.22.09,
2:30—4:30

Where:
IA/NEPCA
Offices in Urbandale, IA.
Also available by conference call

Freedom From Smoking Training

When:
6.23.09,
8:30—4:30

Where:
American Lung Association
Offices in Urbandale, IA

Depression

Secondhand Smoke May Double Likelihood of Depression

Secondhand smoke not only can irritate your lungs, it also can increase a person's likelihood of depression, a large study reports.

Non-smokers exposed to cigarette smoke at home or work are more than twice as likely as those not exposed to have major depression, according to a report at the American Psychosomatic Society meeting in Chicago.

It's believed to be the first U.S. study tying secondhand smoke to depression; another in Japan came up with a similar conclusion.

Unlike the Japanese research, this study confirmed exposure to smoke by measuring cotinine — a chemical that occurs in blood after breathing in smoke. There were cotinine levels for more than 3,000 non-smoking adults in a federal health study. An additional 92,000 non-smokers only reported if they lived with or worked around smokers. Everyone also filled out questionnaires on symptoms of depression.

Whether secondhand smoke was verified by the blood, those exposed to smoke were far more likely to have symptoms of serious depression, says study leader Frank Bandiera, a public health researcher at the University of Miami School of Medicine. Even working where smoking was allowed in public places more than doubled the risk of depression, he says.

There's strong evidence that smokers have higher rates of depression than non-smokers, but studies conflict on whether the smoking came first or vice versa, Bandiera says. Animal and human studies do show that smokers have more dopamine in their brains, which he says has been tied to anxiety and depression. It seems that secondhand smoke might have the same effect on non-smokers.

Adapted From/Source: http://www.usatoday.com/news/health/2009-03-04-secondhand-smoke_N.htm

Questions or Comments?

E-mail us at sdixongale@ianepca.com or kburgener@ianepca.com
Or Call 515-244-9610 and ask for Sarah or Kate