An increase in the number of admitted patients with exercise-induced rhabdomyolysis.

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        Patient Admission - statistics & numerical data
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        Rhabdomyolysis - blood - epidemiology - etiology - urine
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BACKGROUND: Under the Norwegian Environmental Tobacco Smoke Act, a minimum of 50% of tables in restaurants have to be in smoke-free areas. The Ministry of Health and Social Affairs has defined “smoke-free restaurants” as a priority objective in its anti-tobacco strategy. MATERIAL AND METHODS: We have investigated smoking policies in restaurants in the City of Tromsø in Northern Norway, as reported by restaurateurs in 1998. Representatives of all the 85 restaurants, bars and pubs in the city were interviewed and their smoking policies and habits reported. This study was part of the local health authority's evaluation of the degree of compliance with the legislation. RESULTS: In 71% of establishments, at least 50% of tables were smoke-free; in 88%, smoking areas were in compliance with the legislation. 86% of restaurateurs reported a positive or neutral attitude to the legislation, 80% thought that their guests were of the same opinion. 47% smoked every day; however, there was no association between smoking habits and smoking policies. INTERPRETATION: Though the prevalence of smoking was high among restaurateurs, this did not affect their attitudes towards the Environmental Tobacco Smoke Act or their policies on smoking.
BACKGROUND: During the last decades, the proportion of smokers has declined and the use of snus has increased. We examined changes in 16-20-year-olds' use of tobacco products after introduction of stricter smoking regulations in 2004. MATERIAL AND METHODS: 16-20-year-olds' use of and attitudes towards tobacco-products were assessed in national surveys representative for the age-group (n 2004 =2400 and n 2007 =2415) in 2004 and 2007. We compared use of such products at the two measurement points and to what extent the decline in smoking and increase in snus. RESULTS: The same proportion of adolescents used snus or smoked in both surveys (28.8 %), but the distribution was markedly changed. In 2004, 22.5 % of the girls and 20.3 % of the boys smoked daily or every week; corresponding figures in 2007 were 17.3 % and 17.0 %. In 2004, 18.2 % of the boys used snus daily or every week and in 2007 the proportion had increased to 24.9 %. Among the girls, this figure tripled between the two surveys, from 2.4 % to 7.3 %. INTERPRETATION: A further reduction in smoking rates can be expected if we presume that the changes we found are stable. The increased use of snus calls for more knowledge about how this product affects health.

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Changes in reporting on passive smoking by parents of small children

BACKGROUND: The Norwegian Cancer Society has led a comprehensive information campaign since 1995 with the aim of reducing young children's ETS (environmental tobacco smoke) exposure in their homes. The aims of the present study were to assess changes in parents' reporting of child exposure to ETS, attitudes towards ETS, and awareness regarding the potential hazards of passive smoking to children.

MATERIAL AND METHODS: A questionnaire along with a stamped, addressed envelope was sent to a stratified random sample of 1000 households in Norway with three-year-old children at the time of the investigation (May 1995 and August 2001).

RESULTS: According to parents, the prevalence of households in which children were exposed to ETS fell from 32% in 1995 to 18% in 2001. In both surveys, the probability of children being exposed was positively correlated with the number of parents smoking and inversely correlated with length of education, negative attitudes towards ETS and strength of health-risk awareness.

INTERPRETATION: The observed changes must be viewed in the light of the media focus on passive smoking during this period, a nationwide information campaign and as an artifact caused by more underreporting of a behaviour that is being internalised as in breach of a norm.

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[Changes in smoking habits among medical students in Bergen 2004-2006]

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Abstract: BACKGROUND: Smoking and snuff habits among medical students are of interest because they may reflect the attitude to smoking and snuff among future doctors, but few longitudinal studies have been performed. MATERIAL AND METHOD: A standard questionnaire, developed by Statistics Norway, was handed out to all medical students at the University of Bergen during plenum lectures in the spring 2004 and 2006. The questionnaires were marked by personal codes to enable follow-up of smoking and snuff habits for each individual student during the study period. New questionnaires were sent by post to all students who did not respond after the initial handout. RESULTS: 799 medical students (89 %) responded in the spring 2004 and 789 students (84 %) in the spring 2006. The study revealed that 3 % of the students smoked regularly in 2004 and 1 % in 2006 and that 20 % were occasional smokers in 2004 and 18 in 2006. 15 % of the students were snuff users in 2004 and this had increased to 24 % in 2006. INTERPRETATION: A decrease was observed in both daily and occasional smokers among medical students in Bergen during the two-year study period. However, the frequency of snuff users increased. The frequency of regular smokers is low, but the number of occasional smokers is higher than in the general population of the same age.

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Abstract: The indoor environment was investigated in 112 Norwegian dwellings where either healthy children or children with asthma were living. Compared with the official guidelines for indoor air quality, more than 50% of the children’s rooms had unacceptable indoor air. Continuous monitoring of carbon dioxide showed unacceptably high levels in 69% of the children’s bedrooms at night. Levels of volatile organic compounds exceeded the guideline in 53% of the dwellings. More than 60% of the children were exposed to environmental tobacco smoke, as identified by nicotine in hair and cotinine in urine samples. Levels of house dust mites in excess of the guideline were found in 45% of the dwellings. The results indicated a need to improve the indoor environment in the homes of children.
BACKGROUND: Different prevalences of cigarette smoking and use of snus between University students and non-students, may supply us with information about the diffusion stage of the epidemic. User characteristics and involvement in other risk behaviour influences their status as diffusion agents.

MATERIAL AND METHODS: 1,655 students at the University of Oslo responded to a postal questionnaire about their tobacco, alcohol and drug use, gambling habits, physical activity and incidence of anxiety and depression. Data on tobacco habits of similarly aged youth outside University were obtained from Statistics Norway.

RESULTS: The response rate was 57%. The proportion of daily smokers was significantly lower among students (men [10 %], women [9.6 %]), than among non-students (men [27 %], women [28 %]). The proportion of snuff users (daily + occasionally) for women was almost three times higher among students (12 %) than non-students (3.8 %). For men the results were different (28 % snuff users among students and 33 % among non-students). The quit-rate for smoking among students was higher for daily (46 %) and former users (61 %) of snus, than among students who had not used snus (34 %). Cigarette smoking increased with drug abuse, alcohol consumption, physical inactiveness, reduced mental health, and absence of parity. Use of snus was a typical male phenomenon, and increased with alcohol consumption and drug abuse.

INTERPRETATION: The diffusion of the snus epidemic seems to be in an early stage for women, while for men it may already have reached a level of maturity. The high proportion of previous smokers among snus users, indicates that snus may affect the prevalence and frequency of smoking in a population. Groups with a low social impact seem to have a higher prevalence of smokers, both in general and among students, while the opposite is the case for snus users.

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[Depressing about tobacco in a report from SIRIUS].
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[Do anti-smoking campaigns use a correct strategy?]
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[Do health personnel talk about passive smoking with parents of small children?]
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INTRODUCTION: Almost seven out of ten parents who smoke state that they have never received information on passive smoking from health personnel when they bring their children in for routine medical examination. We examined what GPs, doctors and nurses at mother-and-child clinics and midwives reported.

MATERIAL AND METHODS: A self-administered questionnaire focusing on practice as regards the matter of passive smoking and children was mailed to a representative sample of 1050 GPs, the senior midwives at Norway's 77 maternity departments, 492 senior public health nurses, and health personnel at 1024 mother-and-child clinics. The response rate varied from 71% (GPs) to 82% (senior midwives).

RESULTS: 70% of the personnel at mother-and-child clinics less often than “always” ask about exposure to passive smoking. 60% of the senior midwives report that the department's personnel less than "to a large extent" allocate time to talk with parents about passive smoking. 40% of the GPs and 50% of the paediatricians say that they “never” bring up the matter of passive smoking when they examine small children and do not know whether members of the household smoke or not. The rest of the GPs bring up the matter in 46% of consultations and the rest of the paediatricians in 63% of consultations. When the child has symptoms that can be associated with passive smoking, the GPs discuss the parents' smoking habits in 88% of the consultations and paediatricians in 100% of consultations.

INTERPRETATION: Only to a small extent do health personnel use their opportunities of motivating parents to change their smoking habits for the sake of the health of their children. Smoking is only brought up by professionals as a matter routine when the children develop symptoms of exposure to tobacco smoke.