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Friday FACTS

4 August 2000

"Leadership, Partnership, and Championship"

JOURNAL OF EPIDEMIOLOGY AND COMMUNITY HEALTH

Smoking and compression of Morbidity 2000; 54:566-74
Author: Dr Wilma Nusselder,

Smokers are not only likely to die earlier than non-smokers, but they are more likely to spend more of their life with a disability than non-smokers, finds research in the Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health. And this is despite the fact that non-smokers, by virtue of living longer, would be expected to experience more disability. The study included over 5500 adults from the ages of 15 to 74 living in Eindhoven and surrounding districts in the Netherlands, and a further 7500 elderly people living in the USA. Their overall life expectancies were assessed at the ages of 30 and 70, as well as their life expectancies with and without disability.

The researchers found that the prevalence of disability at each age was lower among non-smokers than among former and current smokers. Non-smokers tended to live fewer years with disability despite living longer. This is because they run lower risks of developing disability through cardiovascular disease, for example, but also because they recovered more quickly from episodes of disability.

At the age of 30 non-smoking men could expect reductions of 11 months and women 13 months in the amount of time spent with a disability. Men who gave up smoking could expect to live 2.5 years, and women just under two years longer, without a disability. The effects were still seen at the age of 70 but were less pronounced.

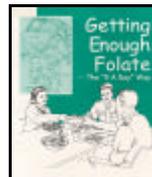
The authors conclude that giving up smoking not only lengthens lifespan and increases the length of time lived without a disability, but also

compresses disability into shorter periods.

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The new World Health Guide to Mental Health in Primary Care is due for release in September 2000! To see an advance on line copy the link is <http://www.whoquidemhpcuk.org/>

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Tobacco in the News

The July 28, 2000 issue of Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report (MMWR) at <http://www.cdc.gov/epo/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm4929a4.htm> featured a new report on Tobacco. The survey study analyzed sales data (over the counter and pharmacies) of tobacco cessation pharmacological agents- i. e. NRT patches, gum and Zyban and

found that more Americans were making attempts to quit. The author Dr. Saul Shiffman stated that by offering more pharmacological options it appears to increase the number of quit attempts by smokers.

"If what you say to someone cannot be said to everyone, then say it to no one."

- J.E. Murdock