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Psychosocial determinants of nicotineism

## Summary

In the study a questionnaire and two tests (the Johns Hopkins Symptom Checklist and Adjective Checklist) were used to examine two random samples of: students attending schools over the primary level, aged 15 to 20 years (N=155) and employees of state-owned and private organizations, aged 21-60 years (N=154).

Regular tobacco smoking was found to be associated with certain personality traits, such as: a high aggression and hostility level, sense of alienation, low self-esteem, low endurance, strong impulsiveness, aloofness in interpersonal relations, and a tendency to frequent conflicts with others. On the other hand, there are some personality traits that help to quit smoking, like: stability, assiduousness and diligence, over self-control, tendency to deference, seeking emotional support, avoiding confrontation and conflicts, as well as mistrustfulness and secretiveness.

Regular smokers are characterized by higher scores in a number of scales, including: anxiety, interpersonal sensitivity, agitated depression, and somatization (more pronounced somatic symptoms of psychological origin).

Among social factors associated with regular tobacco smoking the following were found: smoking by a spouse, alcohol drinking, stressful situations, personal problems and conflicts, many smokers in the immediate environment.

There are also social factors that aid quitting tobacco smoking - they are a reverse of the above-listed ones, e.g.: having a non-smoking spouse, less stressful events and fewer personal problems, moderate drinking or abstinence from alcohol, less smokers in one's immediate environment.

It should be noted that there is no particular personality profile specific to persons with nicotine dependence.

Research findings indicate a significantly inferior state of both physical and mental health in regular smokers as compared to non-smoking persons.

**Key words:** psychosocial determinants, nicotineism, tobacco smoking

## Piśmiennictwo

1. Action Plan for a Tobacco-free Europe. WHO Regional Office for Europe, Copenhagen 1993.