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Title: Parents' smoking and smoking behavior in young asthmatics

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Body: Background: Smoking is health hazard, especially in children and adults with asthma. They are in a high risk to develop chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD). Aim: To explore smoking behavior in young asthmatics according to their parents smoking habit - do they start to smoke? Method: According to questionnaire, clinical examinations, lung function and skin prick tests we separated 74 adolescents with asthma out of 1134 pupils of one high school. They were followed-up every 5 years up to 15 years. Results: We had 62.9% of female and 37.1% of male subjects. At the beginning of the study average age was 16.3 and 30.6 at the end. We had 71% of smoking families (69% of smoking mothers and 37% of fathers). Percent of young smokers with asthma cumulatively increased from 16.7% at the beginning up to 58.5% at the end of the study. Number of cigarettes increased from 7.5 to 16.5% cigarettes per day per smoking asthmatics during the study, no difference according to gender. Average duration of smoking experience was 11.5 years, no difference according to gender. Values of VC, FVC, FEV1, PEF and MEF75 were lower in asthmatics that smoke, but with no statistical difference. However, FEV1/ VC, MEF25 and MEF50 were statistically decreased in the smoking group at the age of 30.6. If both parents smoke, 95% of adolescents and young asthmatics will start to smoke, if only mother smoke 50% of them and in nonsmoking families 30%. Conclusion: Influence of both smoking parents is an important factor that motivates child with asthma to start smoking. It is hard to distinguish if it is the influence of behavior pattern, or addiction, or both. It is necessary to educate adolescents with asthma about the negative effects of tobacco smoke.