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Title: Evaluation of the correlation between pictorial health warning labels and decision to quit smoking

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Body: Background: Applying health warning labels on tobacco products, as an efficient measure for reducing tobacco consumption rate, put an end on tobacco industry abuse through attractive and beautiful packaging. Iran is among the leading countries in legalizing the application of warning labels on tobacco products and has executed it since February, 2009. At present in Iran, 50% of the front and back of tobacco packages should be covered by warning labels. The present study aimed at evaluating the relationship between health warning labels and smoking cessation intention in smokers. Methods: This descriptive cross-sectional study was carried out in summer of 2011, two years after applying the first series of health warning labels on tobacco products in Iran. 2,020 smokers from all districts of Tehran were interviewed. Data were collected. Obtained data were analyzed by SPSS v.17. Results: Among our understudy subjects, 1,273 (65.7%) consumed labeled cigarettes (66% of men and 41% of women). Regarding influence of warning labels on tobacco consumption by the smokers, 18.2% stated a decrease in their consumption rate, and 15.7% reported their intention for quitting. Also, 35.7% of these smokers believed that putting disgusting graphic labels on cigarette packaging would increase their motivation for quitting. Discussion: Evidence reveals that graphic warning labels could produce a great motivation for quitting and avoid smoking initiation in non-smokers. we found that more than 58% of female smokers used non-labeled cigarettes that was twice the rate in men. It may be indicative of less motivation in women and greater impact of pictorial warning labels on them.