

Anti-smoking law helps waiters to quit smoking

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The results confirm that 5 percent of waiters have stopped smoking. Credit: SINC

Researchers from the Catalan Institute of Oncology have studied the impact of the law banning smoking in public places such as bars and restaurants on those working in these places. The results are positive - 5% of waiters have stopped smoking, and the number of cigarettes smoked by those who still smoke has fallen by almost 9%.

On 1 January 2006, a [smoking](#) ban came into force in public places in [Spain](#). More than three years later, these health measures against tobacco smoking have borne fruit. A new study led by researchers from the Catalan Institute of Oncology (ICO) has shown that the proportion of smokers strongly addicted to [nicotine](#) has halved as a result of the law.

All the effects observed during this research study, which is published this month in the journal *Nicotine and Tobacco Research*, have been "significantly reduced" among waiters in bars where smoking has been completely banned than among those who work in places with smoking areas, or where there are no restrictions in place. "Changing the partial ban on tobacco consumption in bars and restaurants for a total ban would have beneficial effects on the health of all the workers in this sector", Esteve Fernández, one of the authors of the study and a researcher at the ICO, tells SINC.

The results confirm that 5% of waiters have stopped smoking and that, among those who continue to smoke, the number of cigarettes consumed has fallen by almost 9% (almost two cigarettes per day). In addition, levels of cotinine - a nicotine metabolite used to measure active, and especially passive, exposure to smoke - in the workers' saliva has fallen by 4.4%.

In total, 431 workers in the bar and restaurant trade were studied (half of whom were smokers) from three months before the law came into force and for a further two years afterwards. The scientists took data from five autonomous regions - Cantabria, Catalonia, Valencia, Galicia and the Balearic Islands.

More information: J.M. Martínez-Sánchez, E. Fernández, M. Fu, M. Pérez- Ríos, M.J. López, C. Ariza, J.A. Pascual, A. Schiaffino, R. Pérez-Ortuno, E. Salto, M. Nebot. "Impact of the Spanish smoking law in smoker hospitality workers". *Nicotine & tobacco research*; 11 (9): 1099-1106; Sep 2009.

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