

Work pressures lower nicotine dependence

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It is often thought that smoking is used as a coping strategy to deal with work stress. However, the pressures of work can actually lower a smoker's nicotine dependence, contrary to popular belief. The surprising finding was published in BioMed Central's open access journal, *Tobacco Induced Diseases*, contradicting even the study researchers' hypothesis.

The German team, led by Anna Schmidt from the University of Cologne, set out to examine the associations between occupational stress factors and [nicotine dependence](#), and examined 197 employed smokers from the Cologne [Smoking](#) Study. The Fagerström Test for Nicotine Dependence, an internationally recognized and statistically validated test for assessing the degree of nicotine dependence in [smokers](#), was used to obtain more detailed information about the study participants' smoking behaviour.

The results of the study indicate that employees who experience stress at work are likely to smoke less than they otherwise would, and, thus, they have a lower dependence on nicotine. The authors speculate that the unexpected findings could be explained by long working hours and strict company smoking regulations. Schmidt said, "Heavy workload may drive employees to smoke only in their spare time".

The study also found that being religious, being married, and having a higher level of education have a significant effect on the prevention of [nicotine](#) dependence.

More information: The influence of occupational stress factors on

nicotine dependence: a cross sectional study, Anna Schmidt, Melanie Neumann, Markus Wirtz, Nicole Ernstmann, Andrea Staratschek-Jox, Erich Stoelben, Jurgen Wolf and Holger Pfaff, Tobacco Induced Diseases (in press), www.tobaccoinduceddiseases.com/

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