

Fake cigarettes increase success rate for quitting smoking

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Nicotine-free plastic inhalers may increase a smoker's chance of quitting, according to new research published online in the *European Respiratory Journal*.

This study is the first to assess the effectiveness of using a nicotine-free inhaler to help stop smoking.

The research, which was carried out by scientists at the Università di Catania in Italy, analysed 120 people who were enrolled in a programme to help them quit smoking.

The participants were split into two groups, with one group receiving the plastic inhalers as a treatment, and the other group following the usual programme.

The researchers also used questionnaires to determine a person's physical and behavioural dependence on cigarettes. After 24 weeks, the participants were asked if they had successfully quit smoking.

Whilst there wasn't a significant difference in the quit rates of both groups overall, people who continue to smoke due to the addictive habit and ritual process of 'lighting up' had a much higher success rate when using the [inhaler](#).

People who were identified as being heavily dependent on the behavioural pattern of smoking had a quit rate of 66.7% in the group

using the inhalers, compared with 19.2% in the other group.

The results show that for smokers who rely on the handling of a cigarette as a behavioural pattern, nicotine-free inhalers could increase their chance of success when trying to quit smoking.

Professor Riccardo Polosa, Director of the University Institute of Internal Medicine and Clinical Immunology at the University of Catania in Italy, said: "By showing a clear predictive association between the measure of behavioural dependence and relapse, our study is the first to reveal that the concept of behavioural addiction can be exploited as a useful clinical tool for many [smokers](#) willing to quit. This will open up a potentially novel area of research in smoking cessation."

Provided by European Lung Foundation

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