

Stopping smoking boosts everyday memory

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Giving up smoking isn't just good for your health, it's also good for your memory, according to research from Northumbria University.

Research published in this month's online edition of *Drug and Alcohol Dependence* reveals that stopping smoking can restore everyday [memory](#) to virtually the same level as non-smokers.

Academics from the University's Collaboration for Drug and Alcohol Research Group tested 27 smokers, 18 previous smokers and 24 who had never smoked on a real-world memory test.

Participants were asked to remember pre-determined tasks at specific locations on a tour of a university campus.

While smokers performed badly, remembering just 59% of tasks, those who had given up smoking remembered 74% of their required tasks compared to those who had never smoked who remembered 81% of tasks.

Dr Tom Heffernan from the Collaboration for Drug and Alcohol Research Group, said: "Given that there are up to 10 million smokers in the UK and as many as 45 million in the United States, it's important to understand the effects smoking has on everyday cognitive function – of which prospective memory is an excellent example."

He added: "This is the first time that a study has set out to examine whether giving up smoking has an impact on memory."

“We already know that giving up smoking has huge health benefits for the body but this study also shows how stopping [smoking](#) can have knock-on benefits for cognitive function too.”

Dr Heffernan, together with Dr Terence O’Neill, is now set to research the impact of ‘second-hand’ smoke on health and everyday memory.

Provided by Northumbria University

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