

Smoking found to be a risk factor for Barrett's esophagus

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(HealthDay) -- Cigarette smoking may be a modifiable risk factor for Barrett's esophagus, according to a study published in the April issue of *Gastroenterology*.

To investigate the association between cigarette smoking and Barrett's esophagus, Michael B. Cook, Ph.D., of the [National Cancer Institute](#) in Bethesda, Md., and associates analyzed data from five case-control studies within the international Barrett's and [Esophageal Adenocarcinoma](#) Consortium. Data were compared for 1,059 patients with Barrett's esophagus, 1,332 controls with [gastroesophageal reflux disease](#) (GERD), and 1,143 population-based controls.

The researchers found that patients with Barrett's esophagus were significantly more likely to have ever smoked cigarettes than the population-based control group or the GERD cohort (odds ratio, 1.67 and 1.61, respectively). There was an increased risk of Barrett's esophagus with increasing pack-years of smoking. Among individuals who ever smoked and had heartburn or regurgitation, the attributable proportion of disease was estimated at 0.39.

"Cigarette smoking is a risk factor for Barrett's esophagus," the authors conclude. "The evidence we present for a biological interaction between smoking and heartburn/regurgitation suggest that cigarette smoking has multifaceted effects in the development of this precancerous metaplasia."

More information: [Abstract](#)
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