

Study looks at links between smoking and prostate cancer screening

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(Medical Xpress) -- Smokers are more likely to develop prostate cancer but only half as likely to get themselves tested for the condition, a study has shown.

Researchers from the UK, Italy and US looked at the links between the habit and the disease, the most commonly diagnosed cancer among the male population.

It showed more than half (50.4%) of non-smokers and almost two-thirds (63.5%) of ex-smokers had been screened for the condition, while less than a third (31.7%) of [smokers](#) had done so.

Dr Yaniv Hanoch, Associate Professor in Psychology at Plymouth University, was part of the research team. He said: “Smokers, by the nature of their [habit](#), are seemingly less concerned about their general state of health than the rest of the population. But individuals who engage in unhealthy behaviours such as [smoking](#) are at increased risk of both suffering a disease and failing to detect it.”

Previous research has shown that a number of elements can indicate a person’s likeliness to be diagnosed with cancer, but smoking can be a contributory factor.

The current study questioned around 300 men aged 46 and over on topics including their current smoking habits and whether they had previously undergone [prostate cancer](#) tests.

Of those who had been screened, more than three quarters of the non-smokers and quitters had been tested more than once while the majority of smokers had only undergone one test.

The researchers now believe their findings need to be used by doctors and healthcare professionals as they look for ways to tackle smoking-related issues in the future.

Dr Hanoch, who worked on the research with Dr Jonathan Rolison, from the Università IUAV di Venezia, and Dr Talya Miron-Shatz, from the University of Pennsylvania, said: “Health professionals have an important role to play in making people aware of the risks of smoking, and health concerns are one of the top reasons why people quit. However, our study indicates that smokers are less likely to undergo screening and may miss a vital opportunity to receive the necessary health advice. Clearly, increased emphasis needs to be made by healthcare providers when discussing issues with smokers. In doing so, this may provide an important means for delivering the necessary health advice.”

More information: [dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.addbeh.2012.02.006](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.addbeh.2012.02.006)

Provided by University of Plymouth

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