

Model identifies adolescents at risk for smoking initiation

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(HealthDay)—A novel prognostic tool can be used to accurately identify

adolescents at risk for initiating cigarette smoking, according to a study published online Oct. 1 in *Pediatrics*.

Marie-Pierre Sylvestre, Ph.D., from the Université de Montréal, and colleagues used data from the Nicotine Dependence in Teens study. A total of 1,294 students from seventh-grade classes in 10 high schools were recruited to respond to questionnaires every three months each school year over five years (1999 to 2005) through completion of high school (20 cycles). Prognostic variables, including [sociodemographic characteristics](#), family and friend [smoking](#) habits, lifestyle factors, personality traits, and mental health, were identified.

The researchers found that the cumulative incidence of cigarette smoking initiation was 16.3 percent. They partitioned data into a training set for model-building and a testing set to assess performance of the model. The final model included 12 variables (age, four worry- or stress-related items, one depression-related item, two self-esteem items, and four alcohol- or tobacco-related variables). The [model](#) achieved a c-statistic of 0.77 and had good calibration.

"This short prognostic tool, which can be incorporated into busy clinical practice, was used to accurately identify adolescents at risk for cigarette smoking initiation," the authors write.

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