

CDC: Former smokers have higher levels of fair, poor health

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(HealthDay)—Smoking cessation is beneficial, but even after cessation,

former smokers have worse health measures, according to a study published online July 22 in *National Health Statistics Reports*, a publication from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Ellen A. Kramarow, Ph.D., from the National Center for Health Statistics in Hyattsville, Maryland, used data from the 2018 National Health Interview Survey to describe the health of former cigarette smokers aged 65 years and older. The percentage of individuals with fair or [poor health](#), [chronic obstructive pulmonary disease](#) (COPD), four or more chronic conditions, and limitations in social participation were estimated.

Kramarow found that 49.4 percent of men and 30.6 percent of women aged 65 years and older were former cigarette smokers. Almost one in four former smokers reported smoking for 40 years or longer. Former smokers reported higher levels of fair or poor health, COPD, and four or more chronic conditions compared with never smokers after controlling for sociodemographic characteristics; similar levels of fair or poor health, four or more chronic conditions, and limitations in social participation were seen for former smokers versus current smokers. As the years of smoking increased, former smokers had higher levels of fair or poor health, COPD, four or more [chronic conditions](#), and social participation limitations.

"Health behaviors earlier in life affect health at older ages. Considering smoking history among former smokers may provide useful information when evaluating overall health status," Kramarow writes.

More information: [Abstract/Full Text](#)

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