

Post-op health care costs up for former, current smokers

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"These excess costs add an estimated \$17 billion annually to direct [medical costs](#) in the United States," the authors conclude.

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(HealthDay)—Health care costs in the year following discharge for an inpatient surgical procedure are increased for former and current smokers, compared with never smokers, although there are no differences with smoking status in costs for the index hospitalization, according to a study published online Jan. 1 in *JAMA Surgery*.

David O. Warner, M.D., from the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minn., and colleagues examined total costs during an index surgical episode and one year after [hospital discharge](#) for all patients undergoing an inpatient surgical procedure at the Mayo Clinic hospitals from April 1, 2008, to Dec. 31, 2009. Propensity matching yielded 678 matched pairs in the current versus never smoker group and 945 pairs in the former versus never smoker group.

The researchers found that adjusted costs for the index hospitalization did not differ significantly for current or former smokers, compared with never smokers. However, based on regression analysis, in the year after hospitalization, the adjusted costs were significantly higher for current and former smokers (predicted monthly difference of \$400 and \$273, respectively).

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