

## **Characteristics of Smoking Cessation among Elderly: Monastir, Tunisia 2009-2015**

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### **ABSTRACT**

**Introduction:** Addictive practices persist in the elderly, mainly alcoholism and smoking. The frequency of somatic or psychiatric illnesses such as anxiety or depressive disorders makes smoking cessation in older people more complex.

The objective of our study was to determine the epidemiological profile of elderly consulting for smoking cessation between 2009 and 2015.

**Methods:** We conducted a descriptive study including all subjects aged 65 years or older followed by the smoking cessation consultation at the Preventive Medicine and Epidemiology Department of Monastir from 2009 to 2015. Success rates were calculated for older subjects who adhered to two or more visits during follow-up.

**Results:** 119 older men consulted for smoking cessation. The median age was 70 [IQI: 67-74 years]. 59.1% of patients had a pathological history (23.6% had a cardiovascular history). Four patients were alcoholics. The HAD score evoked an anxiety state in 4.3% of cases and a depressive state in 19.4% of cases. The median number of cigarettes smoked per day was 21 [IIQ: 20-40]. The median age of beginning smoking was 17 years [IQI: 14-20 years]. Fagerström's score evoked strong or very strong nicotine dependence (score > 8) in 48.3% of cases. The median carbon monoxide test was 9.5 [6-14] with 7.6% between 21 and 50 (heavy smoker). Of the 119 smokers, only 48 consulted twice or more. The abstinence rate at 3 months was 4.3%.

**Conclusion :** This study shows that smoking in the elderly is coexisting with comorbidity. However, unfortunately the rate of abstinence was low. Further efforts are needed to improve smoking cessation in this vulnerable population.