

## Prevalence of Cigarette Smoking among Medical Students and it's Association with GAD in Saudi Arabia, 2021

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### ABSTRACT

**Study Design:** Cross sectional

**Background:** Generalized anxiety disorder (GAD) is characterized by excessive and exaggerated anxiety and worry over daily-life events for no apparent reason. People who suffer from GAD are constantly on the lookout for disaster and cannot stop worrying about their health, money, family, work, or school (NIMH, 2016). It often occurs along with other mental health problems, e.g., phobias. panic disorder. post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD), depression, and substance abuse, which can make diagnosis and treatment more challenging. Smoking is a damaging habit both physically and psychologically, especially for people with GAD, in which case it can actually exacerbate symptoms of anxiety.

**Methods:** This is a cross-sectional study for which data were collected using a questionnaire comprising multiple-choice questions on the participants' demographic information, their feeling of nervousness and anxiousness, worrying too much about different things, trouble in relaxing, feeling restless, irritability, severe mental disorder, smoking cigarette, frequency of smoking, age at which smoking is started, smoking when feeling stressed, whether smoking helps reducing stress.

**Results:** The participants are students of 18 different universities, both public and private, spread across 11 different regions of Saudi Arabia. Among 370 students approached for the survey, 307 were medical students and the remaining 63 were non-medical students. Almost 25% of total precipitants smoke cigarettes, and about 55% of them started smoking after enrolled to the college of Medicine. The study showed many students use this behavior to reduce stressors which more prone to medical students.

**Conclusion:** To summarize, the present study demonstrated that smoking is unfortunately quite widespread among Saudi Arabian medical students, who will shortly be the leaders and role models in health care; hence, more effective ways to reduce this bad habit are required. More studies need to look for it's relationship with Stresses or anxiety disorders.

**Keywords:** Smoking, Generalized, Anxiety, Disorder, Health

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