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Smokers more likely to drink alcohol, says study



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Mumbai, Sep 29 (PTI) Smokers are more likely to consume alcohol and suffer from psychiatric illness than non-smokers, a study has revealed.

The study, carried out by the city-based Asian Heart Institute, also found that a significant number of people pick up the habit to reduce stress or for pleasure.

The study, "Incidence, reasons for smoking in cardiovascular patients and benefits of quitting," comes on the occasion of the World Heart Day today.

It surveyed 2,951 OPD patients aged 18 years or older from February 2016 to August 2017. The study aimed at finding patterns in the habits of smokers, reasons why people actually quit smoking and to put together a counselling docket on how soon the body benefits after quitting the habit.

Ramakanta Panda, Vice-Chairman and MD of the Asian Heart Institute, said, "Today, WHO data reveals that more people are protected by strong graphic pack warnings (about ill-effects of smoking) covering almost 3.5 billion people in 78 countries ? almost half the global population (47 pc).

"Yet, only 15 per cent of the world's population is currently covered by a comprehensive ban. Consequently, one in 10 deaths around the world is caused by tobacco."

The survey revealed that smokers are more likely to drink alcohol and suffer from psychiatric illness than those who don't smoke. A smoker reaches out for his first cigarette in less than 4 hours after waking up, the research said.

The data revealed that 36.5 per cent people smoke by habit, 24.2 per cent to reduce stress and 22.2 per cent for pleasure. Only 15.4 per cent people said they are addicted. Also, 6.7 per cent of the sample size did not reveal any reason.

Asked what motivated them to quit the habit, 67.7 per cent of the respondents cited its adverse impact on their health. Another 14.4 per cent said they didn't want to smoke in front of their children and set a bad example.

Other reasons cited by 16.8 per cent of the respondents included parents asking them to quit and someone else suffering because of their smoking habit.

Nilesh Gautam, a cardiologist who surveyed the data, said, "We counsel patients that quitting smoking has short-term benefits too. Researchers (secondary data) identified 52 metabolites (intermediates & products of metabolism) that were significantly altered after the subjects stopped smoking." PTI MM RSY BAS