

Time to first cigarette in the morning as an index of ability to quit smoking: Implications for nicotine dependence

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Abstract

An inability to maintain abstinence is a key indicator of tobacco dependence. Unfortunately, little evidence exists regarding the ability of the major tobacco dependence measures to predict smoking cessation outcome. This paper used data from four placebo-controlled smoking cessation trials and one international epidemiological study to determine relations between cessation success and the Fagerstrom Test for Nicotine Dependence (FTND), the Heaviness of Smoking Index, the Nicotine Dependence Syndrome Scale, and the Wisconsin Inventory of Smoking Dependence Motives. Results showed that much of the predictive validity of the FTND could be attributed to its first item, time to first cigarette in the morning, and this item had greater validity than any other single measure. Thus the time-to-first-cigarette item appears to tap a pattern of heavy, uninterrupted, and automatic smoking and may be a good single-item measure of nicotine dependence.

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