

# Use of and beliefs about light cigarettes in four countries: Findings from the International Tobacco Control Policy Evaluation Survey

Ron Borland, Hua-Hie Yong, Bill King, K. Michael Cummings, Geoffrey T. Fong,  
Tara Elton-Marshall, David Hammond, Ann McNeill

## **Abstract**

This study examined reported use of, and beliefs about, so-called light cigarettes among adult smokers in four countries: Australia (Aus), Canada (Can), the United Kingdom (U.K.) and the United States (U.S.). The method used was parallel telephone surveys among 9,046 smokers across the four countries. The results indicated that more than half of all smokers in each country except the U.K. reported smoking light cigarette brands. A majority of smokers surveyed in each country except Canada continue to believe that light cigarettes offer some health benefit compared to regular cigarettes (Canada 43%, U.S. 51%, Australia 55%, U.K. 70%). A majority of smokers in all four countries believed that light cigarettes are smoother on the throat and chest than regular cigarettes. Predictors of use of light cigarettes and beliefs about possible benefits were very similar in the four countries. These results demonstrate an ongoing need for public education about why light cigarettes do not reduce harm and do not make quitting easier. The results provide further evidence for the need for regulatory measures in all four countries to prohibit the use of misleading light and mild descriptors including package imagery in product marketing (as prescribed in Article 11 of the Framework Convention on Tobacco Control), abandon the use of standard FTC/ISO tar and nicotine yields as consumer information, and adopt policies to regulate deceptive design features of cigarettes such as ventilated filters.

## **Recommended Citation:**

Borland R, Yong HH, King B, Cummings KM, Fong GT, Elton TE, Hammond D and McNeil A.  
Use of and beliefs about light cigarettes in four countries: Findings from the International Tobacco  
Control Policy Evaluation Survey. *Nicotine and Tobacco Research* 2004; 6(Suppl3): S311-S321.

**Link to PDF:** [http://ntr.oxfordjournals.org/content/6/Suppl\\_3/S311.full.pdf+html](http://ntr.oxfordjournals.org/content/6/Suppl_3/S311.full.pdf+html)