

Evaluating the impact of menthol cigarette bans on cessation and smoking behaviours in Canada: Longitudinal findings from Canadian arm of the 2016-2018 ITC 4 Country Smoking and Vaping Surveys

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Abstract

Objective To evaluate the impact of menthol cigarette bans in seven Canadian provinces between 2016 and 2018.

Methods Longitudinal data from the Canadian arm of the 2016 and 2018 ITC Four Country Smoking and Vaping Survey. 1098 non-menthol and 138 menthol smokers were surveyed pre-menthol and post-menthol cigarette bans. Multivariate logistic regression models examined associations between pre-post ban changes in smoking behaviour, including differences between menthol and non-menthol smokers in quit attempts and quitting.

Results At follow-up, 59.1% of pre-ban menthol smokers switched to non-menthol cigarettes; 21.5% quit smoking and 19.5% still smoked menthols, primarily purchased from First Nations reserves. Menthol smokers were more likely than non-menthol smokers to make a quit attempt (adjusted OR (aOR)=1.61, 95% CI 1.03 to 2.51), and to remain quit (aOR=2.30, 95% CI 1.06 to 5.01). Menthol smokers did not differ significantly from non-menthol smokers in quit success (aOR=1.72, 95% CI 0.98 to 3.01); however, daily menthol smokers were more likely than daily non-menthol smokers to quit (aOR=2.21, 95% CI 1.15 to 4.24), and daily menthol smokers who quit before the ban were more likely than daily non-menthol smokers to remain quit (aOR=2.81, 95% CI 1.15 to 6.85).

Conclusions Although menthol smokers were most likely to switch to non-menthol cigarettes, the menthol ban was also significantly associated with higher rates of quit attempts and quit success among menthol smokers compared with non-menthol smokers, and may have helped to prevent relapse among menthol smokers who had quit smoking before the ban. Results confirm and extend evaluation of Ontario's menthol ban across provinces covering 83% of the Canadian population.

Recommended Citation

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