

# Effectiveness of Text-Only Cigarette Health Warnings in Japan: Findings from the 2018 International Tobacco Control (ITC) Japan Survey

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## Abstract

Health warnings are an effective strategy for communicating the health harms of smoking, encouraging quitting, and preventing smoking initiation. This study examines the effectiveness of existing text-only health warnings, identifies key predictors of warning effectiveness, and assesses support for pictorial warnings in Japan. Data are from the 2018 International Tobacco Control (ITC) Japan Survey, a cohort survey of adult cigarette smokers (n = 3306), dual users of cigarettes and heated tobacco products (n = 555), and non-cigarette smokers (n = 823). Weighted multivariable logistic regression models were used to assess predictors of warning effectiveness and support for pictorial warnings. Overall, 15.6% of respondents noticed warnings, and 7.9% read or looked closely at warnings. Overall, 10.3% of smokers and dual users said the warnings stopped them from having a cigarette, and 7.2% avoided warnings. Overall, 27.5% of respondents said the warnings made them think about health risks of smoking, but only 2.7% of smokers and dual users said the warnings made them more likely to quit. Overall, 57.6% of respondents supported pictorial warnings. The weak effectiveness of Japan's text-only warnings is consistent with that in other countries with similar warnings. There is majority support for pictorial warnings in Japan, although the level of support is lower than in other countries.

## Recommended Citation

Chung-Hall, J., Fong, G.T., Meng, G., Yan, M., Tabuchi, T., Yoshimi, I., Mochizuki, Y., Craig, L., Ouimet, J., Quah, A.C.K. (2020). Effectiveness of Text-only Cigarette Health Warnings in Japan: Findings from the 2018 International Tobacco Control (ITC) Japan Survey. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 17(13), 952. Doi: <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph17030952>.

Link to PDF: <https://www.mdpi.com/1660-4601/17/3/952/htm>