

Socioeconomic position and abrupt versus gradual method of quitting smoking: Findings from the International Tobacco Control Four-Country Survey

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Abstract

Introduction: Our aim was to investigate the association between socioeconomic position (income and education) and abrupt versus gradual method of smoking cessation.

Methods: The analysis used data ($n = 5,629$) from Waves 1 through 6 (2002–2008) of the International Tobacco Control Four-Country Survey, a prospective study of a cohort of smokers in the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom, and Australia.

Results: Logistic regression analyses using generalized estimating equations showed that higher income ($p < .001$) and higher education ($p = .011$) were associated with a higher probability of abrupt versus gradual quitting. The odds of adopting abrupt versus gradual quitting were about 40% higher among respondents with high income (\$60,000 and more in the United States/Canada/Australia and £30,000 and more in the United Kingdom) compared with those with low income (less than \$30,000 in the United States/Canada/Australia; £15,000 and less in the United Kingdom). Similarly, the odds of abrupt versus gradual quitting were about 30% higher among respondents with a high level of education (university degree) compared with those with a low level of education (high school diploma or lower).

Discussion: Higher socioeconomic position is associated with a higher probability of quitting abruptly rather than gradually reducing smoking before quitting.

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