People With HIV Have High Rates of Smoking, Low Rates of Quitting

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HIV-positive Americans are more likely to smoke and less likely to quit smoking than the general population, Medscape reports. Publishing their findings in the Annals of Internal Medicine, researchers analyzed data from cross-sectional surveys to examine smoking use among people with HIV and the population at large.

The analysis included 4,217 HIV-positive adults from the Medical Monitoring Project and 27,731 HIV-negative adults from the 2009 National Health Interview Survey.

The researchers estimated that out of the 420,000 HIV-positive Americans receiving care for the virus, 42.4 percent smoke, 20.3 percent used to smoke, and 37.3 percent never smoked. This is compared with a 20.6 percent rate of smoking in the general population. HIV-positive adults are twice as likely to smoke, but less likely to quit smoking than the general population. While just 32.4 percent of HIV-positive smokers have quit, 51.7 percent of smokers in the general population have done so.

Factors that were independently associated with a greater likelihood of smoking among the HIV-positive population were older age, white or black (as opposed to Latino) race, less education, poverty, homelessness, incarceration, substance use, heavy drinking, depression and having a detectable viral load.

To read the Medscape story, click here.

To read the study abstract, click here.

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