

Factors associated with desires to use smoking cessation medications among Chinese Americans

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BACKGROUND: Using smoking cessation medications such as nicotine replacement medications (NRT) increases significantly the odds of quitting smoking. Population studies found low use of medications particularly among smokers of ethnic minority including Chinese Americans.

OBJECTIVE: The study examined factors associated with the desire to use smoking cessation medications among Chinese Americans.

METHOD: Screening data were obtained from 482 Chinese American daily smokers enrolled in a smoking cessation trial providing free NRT. Sample characteristics were: 15% female, mean age = 42 (SD=16.5), 95% preferred reading Chinese, cigarettes smoked daily = 14 (SD=9.4), 58% had a 24-hour quit attempt past year, 90% intended to quit in 6 months (57% in 30 days), and 54% were very or extremely motivated to reduce smoking in 30 days.

RESULTS: More than half (57%) indicated desire to use medication to help reduce or quit smoking. Multiple logistic regression showed that desire to use was associated with being female (OR=2.4, 95% CI: 1.3-4.4), lower income (OR=1.5, 95% CI: 1.02-2.3), preference of speaking non-Cantonese (OR=1.9, 95% CI: 1.3-2.9), smoking moderately between 10-19 cigarettes daily (OR=1.8, 95% CI: 1.1-3.0), being in contemplation (OR=2.9, 95% CI: 1.4-6.3) or preparation (OR=2.7, 95% CI: 1.2-6.3), or being very motivated to reduce smoking (OR=2.4, 95% CI: 1.6-3.6). Age, recent quit attempts and use of prescription or OTC medications were not significant predictors.

CONCLUSION: Smoking cessation interventions targeting Chinese Americans should attempt to increase desire to use smoking cessation medications among Cantonese speakers, men, heavy (>20/day) smokers, and those who were less motivated to quit or reduce smoking. Despite low use of NRT among Chinese Americans was documented in previous studies, smoking cessation medications should be made available to those who are motivated to quit (i.e., in contemplation and preparation stages).

Learning Objectives:

- Recognize the associations between using smoking cessation medications and cessation outcomes
- Identify factors associating with the desires to use smoking cessation medications among Chinese American smokers
- Discuss the implications for increase Chinese American's awareness and desires to use smoking cessation aids to quit or reduce smoking

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