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Smoking Habits among Adult Subjects with Newly Diagnosed Diabetes in Kuwait

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Introduction Smoking is a modifiable risk factor for the development of diabetes. It also increases substantially morbidity and mortality associated with the disease. We conducted a cross-sectional survey from April 2005 to March 2006 to explore smoking habits among adult subjects with newly diagnosed diabetes in Kuwait.

Methods : Newly diagnosed diabetics aged 20 years and older who were registered in five primary health care centers with mini-diabetic clinics from the five health regions were questioned about their smoking habits.

Results : Data were available for 925 subjects (612 males, 313 females; 29% Kuwaitis, 71% expatriates). Overall, 247 (26.7%) of the patients were current smokers (36.9% among men and 6.7% among women; 15.3 % among Kuwaitis, 36.9% among other Arabs and 22.7% among Southeast Asians) and 64 (6.9%) were former smokers. Among men, the highest prevalence of current smoking was observed among those aged < 45 years (40.2%), and among other Arabs (47.7%). Among current smokers, about 83% of the subjects smoked only cigarettes while the others smoked cigar or hubble-bubble. The majority of smokers (71%) began smoking when younger than 30 years and the average number of cigarettes consumed each day was 22. Compared with non- smokers, smokers were more likely to be younger and have lower body mass index. Former smokers were more physically active compared to current and never smokers, and had higher education level compared to never smokers.

Conclusion Cigarette smoking is more prevalent in younger men with newly diagnosed diabetes in Kuwait. Anti-smoking education should be an integral part of diabetes prevention and treatment strategies.

Keywords : Diabetes, Smoking, Kuwait