

SMOKING EVEN ONE CIGARETTE PER DAY DRAMATICALLY RAISES CARDIOVASCULAR RISK

Everist Health's Vascular Age Calculator is the Only Tool to Incorporate this New Study Finding

A comprehensive 2018 analysis* of 141 clinical studies published between 1946 to 2015, involving more than 14 million men and women, debunks the prior notion that reducing the number of cigarettes smoked per day results in a proportionate reduction in cardiovascular disease (CVD) risk.

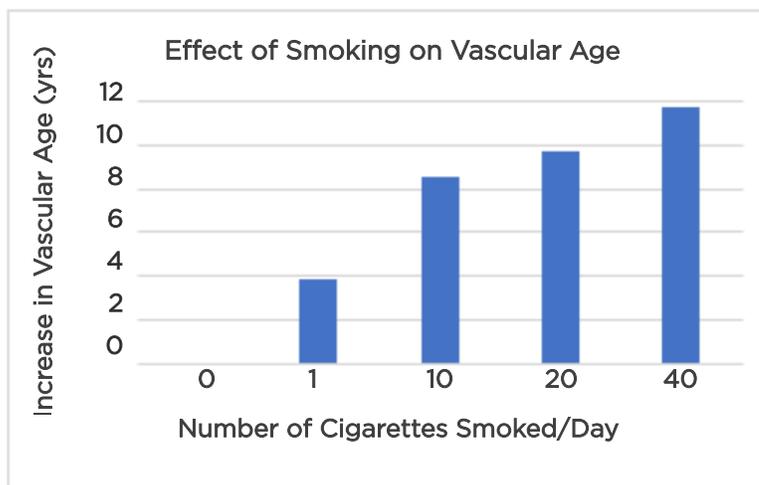
Whereas it is well-recognized that there is an approximate linear relationship between the risk for lung cancer and the number of cigarettes smoked per day, i.e., doubling the number of cigarettes smoked per day doubles one's lung cancer risk, it now appears that this relationship no longer holds for CVD risk, as previously assumed.

In reality, smoking just 1 cigarette per day increases a man's risk for coronary heart disease by 50% and that for a woman nearly 60%. Although CVD risk continues to increase as more cigarettes are smoked daily, the rate of change flattens out as one approaches 1 pack (20 cigarettes) per day - to about double the risk for coronary artery disease and stroke compared to non-smokers.

Substantial biological evidence shows that components of cigarette smoke lead to endothelial injury, atherosclerosis, and a decreased ability of the blood to carry oxygen. It is estimated that about two-thirds of the coronary heart disease deaths that occur in smokers is attributable to their smoking habit. Quitting smoking greatly reduces the risk of CVD, with important benefits gained soon after stopping (quicker than for lung cancer).

Everist Health's Vascular Age Calculator promises to enable people to better understand that smoking even 1 cigarette daily dramatically increases their risk for CVD and that avoiding smoking altogether is the only way to significantly decrease it.

Translation of the study's findings to the corresponding effect of smoking on Vascular Age, as incorporated in the most recent version of Everist Health's Vascular Age Calculator:



KEY FINDINGS:

- Smoking just 1 cigarette per day carries a risk of developing coronary heart disease and stroke that is much greater than previously expected - about half that for people who smoke 20 cigarettes (1 pack) per day.
- There is no safe level of smoking regarding CVD risk.
- Smokers should aim to quit completely rather than simply cutting down to significantly reduce their CVD risk.

*Hacksaw et al. British Medical Journal 2018; <https://dx.doi.org/10.1136/bmj.j5855>