



PLPS 9/2020

Statement of the Anti-Smoking Committee of the Lebanese Pulmonary Society (ASC-LPS) on the Tobacco / Nicotine-COVID 19 Harmful relationship 5/5/2020

The ASC-LPS is issuing a statement about their position regarding scientific evidence on Tobacco/Nicotine in COVID 19 patients.

**Anti-Smoking
Committee
President:
Dr. Mireille
SFEIR**

We will strive to update this document as needed in a timely fashion knowing that COVID 19 is a new disease with pieces of information evolving on a daily basis. This document is based on the latest studies as well as on the latest CDC & WHO opinions.

**Members:
Dr. Georges
KHAYAT**

It is obvious from the studies reported on COVID 19 that smokers have a higher risk of developing the severe form of COVID-19 with the need to ICU management and mechanical ventilation, and even of dying (WHO, CDC, ERS. .)

**Dr. Mirna
WAKED**

**Dr. Youssef
HADDAD**

The deleterious effects on health, of tobacco and nicotine, are very well known and are irrevocable in the era prior to the Coronavirus. It is based on evidence dating back more than 20 years. Smoking is the 1st risk factor for non-communicable diseases such as COPD, HTA, and cardiovascular illnesses. Still, there is every day people dying from smoking, but this was put apart in the era of Corona virus.

**Dr. Ralph
NEHME**

**Dr. Carlos
NOUJEIM**

**Dr. Georges
CHALOUHY**

Both WHO and CDC have highlighted the aggravating effects of smoking on all respiratory infections and specifically during COVID 19 infections.

With the bulky number of publications about COVID 19, some noted in their data analysis a lower rate of smokers among COVID-19 patients compared to the general French, Chinese and American populations. We noticed by reviewing the

study where this was described that the smoking status of some the patients with an unknown smoking status were included in the non-smokers. This is strongly against the hypothetic favorable action of nicotine on the ACE2 receptor (Coronavirus receptor in the airways) that remains highly controversial.

Moreover, we must keep in mind that : 1- even small doses of nicotine (patches) may be badly tolerated by non-smokers with many major cardiac side effects and also minor such as nausea, vomiting, palpitations, headaches ; 2- most of the studies' results are manipulated by the tobacco industries, spreading false informations ; 3- avoiding touching the mouth by hands is a cornerstone measure for preventing COVID contamination, which is failed to be done in smokers where fingers are going and coming and can expose the smoker to a self-contamination and to the contamination all the cigarettes in his box.

This also applies to the Narghile where the water in the container is a favorable environment for survival of microorganisms. Furthermore, sharing the mouthpiece and the pipe promotes contamination.

Dr. Mireille SFEIR,

President of the Anti-Smoking Committee

Dr. Zeina Aoun Bacha,

President of the Lebanese Pulmonary Society