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## Quitting Smoking: It's Never Too Late

(ScienceDaily) Many people spend a lifetime trying to give up smoking, but there is good news for older smokers from research carried out at the Peninsula Medical School in South West England.



A study by Dr. Iain Lang and his colleagues has revealed that the point of retirement is one of the most effective times to try to give up smoking. The study followed 1712 smokers aged 50 years and older over a six-year period, taking into account their work status (whether an individual was working or retired) and smoking status (whether a non-smoker or smoker).

The research showed that a total of 42.5 per cent of those who had recently retired had quit smoking, compared with 29.3 per cent of those in employment and 30.2 per cent for those who were already retired. The results indicate those who undergo the transition into retirement are more likely to quit smoking than those who do not.

Said Dr. Lang: "Retirement is one of the great transitions in life, which is why a greater proportion of people may find it easier to make significant changes elsewhere in their lives at this time. Retirement is a point of life at which people have a whole range of opportunities to do things they haven't previously felt able to do. We are excited at the possibility that what we have seen with smoking may also apply to other aspects of lifestyle, like eating more healthily and doing more exercise. That would be a great result not just for the health of the individual but also because it would relieve some of the pressure placed upon the NHS by an ageing population."

He added: "However, anyone who isn't planning to retire just yet shouldn't put off quitting. The sooner you quit the sooner you will experience the benefits -- when it comes to stopping smoking there's no time like the present!"

The Peninsula Medical School team also suggests that employers who are putting together retirement training for their staff should also include guidance about how to have a healthy retirement.

Dr Lang stated: "We would also like to see more employers use retirement as a catalyst for supporting the ongoing health of their retired employees. Preparing them for a healthy retirement is good HR policy -- and quitting smoking will be an important part of that."