

Abstract Presentations

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& Abstract Presentations*

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Behaviours and attitudes towards Tobacco Smoking in Tunisian patients with Chronic Non-communicable Diseases

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Keys and facts

- A non-communicable disease (NCD) is a disease that is not transmissible directly from one person to another.
- NCDs include strokes, most heart diseases, most cancers, diabetes, chronic kidney diseases and others.
- NCDs kill 41 million people each year, equivalent to 71% of all deaths globally.
- Over 85% of these "premature" deaths occur in low-and middle-income countries (LMIC).
- Tobacco use, physical inactivity, and unhealthy diets all increase the risk of dying from a NCD.
- Tobacco use is the leading preventable risk factor for NCDs.
- Tunisia is an example of an LMIC experiencing a growing burden of NCDs.

Background

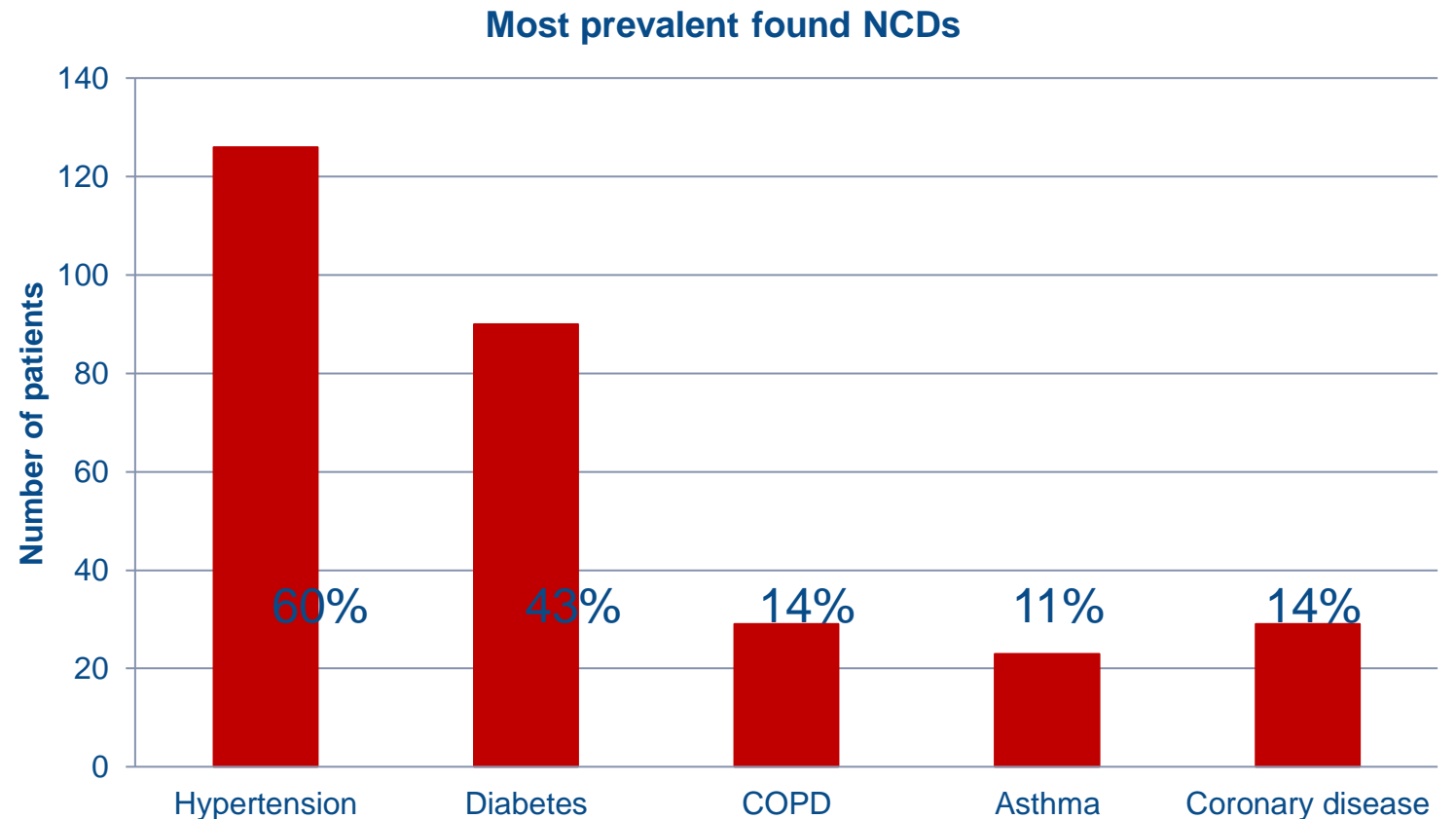
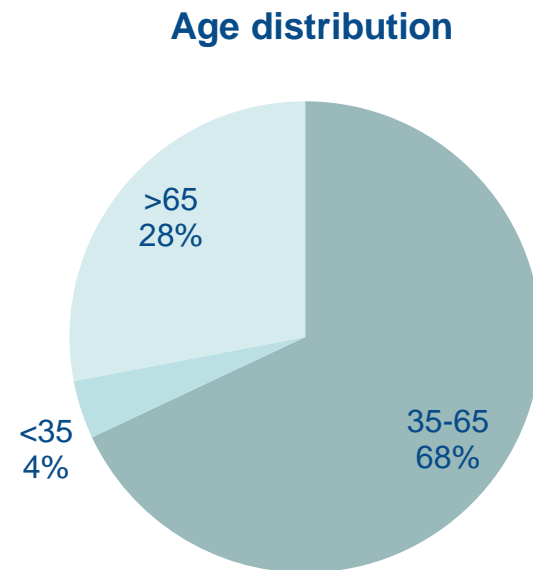
- Between January 2016 and February 2019, the Tunisian Association on Study and Research on Atherosclerosis (ATERA) and the International Atherosclerosis Society (IAS) made, for the first time, a large national study, the ATERA-Survey
- The survey involved 11,955 individuals aged 25 - 75years.
- The prevalence of risk factors was:
 - hypertension :50.5%
 - diabetes :18.2%
 - dyslipidemia :44%
 - obesity :31.4%
 - smoking : 24.4%
- Every year, in Tunisia, more than 11100 of its people are killed by tobacco-caused disease. Still, more than 7,000 children (10-14 years old) and 1,654,000 adults (15+ years old) continue to use tobacco each day.

Our Survey

- **Aim:** To assess the underlying factors of Tobacco-smoking behaviours and attitudes in patients with Non-communicable Chronic Diseases (NCD) in Tunisia.
- **Methods:** A survey of smokers (or ex smokers) patients with NCDs was launched. Primary Care Physicians were invited to fill in a form for patients who consent to anonymous storage of their data.

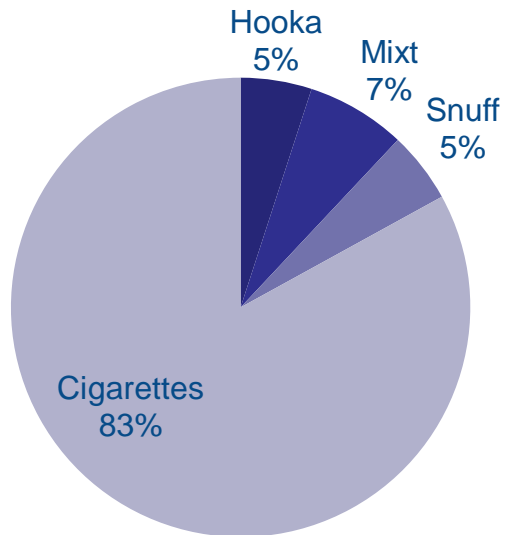
Results

- ▶ Data of 210 patients were collected by 29 Primary Care Physicians.
- ▶ 82% of them were male.
- ▶ 68% were current Tobacco-smokers.

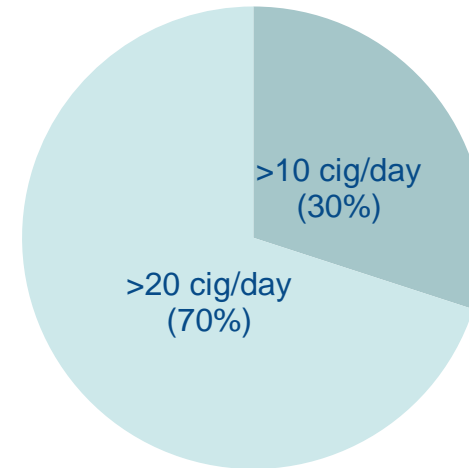


Results

Smoking type



Current smokers



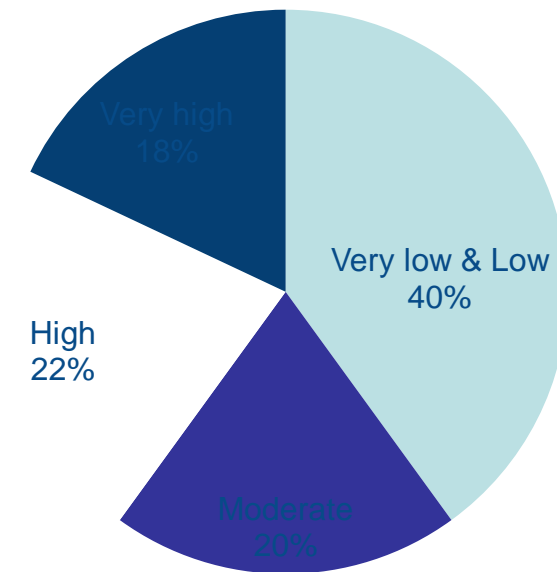
- Current cigarette active smokers (68%) and cigarettes ex-smokers (31%) were the most reported conditions.
- Hooka smoking and snuff were reported in 10%.
- Nicotine-dependence was evaluated using the Fagerström Test.

Fagerstrom Test for Nicotine Dependence

	0	1	2	3
How soon after you wake up do you smoke your first cigarette?	After 60 Min.	31 – 60 Min.	6-30 min.	Within 5 min.
Do you find it difficult to refrain from smoking in places where it is forbidden, e.g., in church, at the library, cinema, etc?	No	Yes		
Which cigarette would you hate most to give up?	All others	First one in the morning		
How many cigarettes/day do you smoke?	10 or less	11-20	21-30	31 or more
Do you smoke more frequently during the first hours of waking than during the rest of the day?	No	Yes		
Do you smoke if you are so ill that you are in bed most of the day?	No	Yes		

Among 183 patients, moderate or high dependence (≥ 5) was found in 60%.

Dependency level



0-2 Very low

3-4 Low

5 Moderate

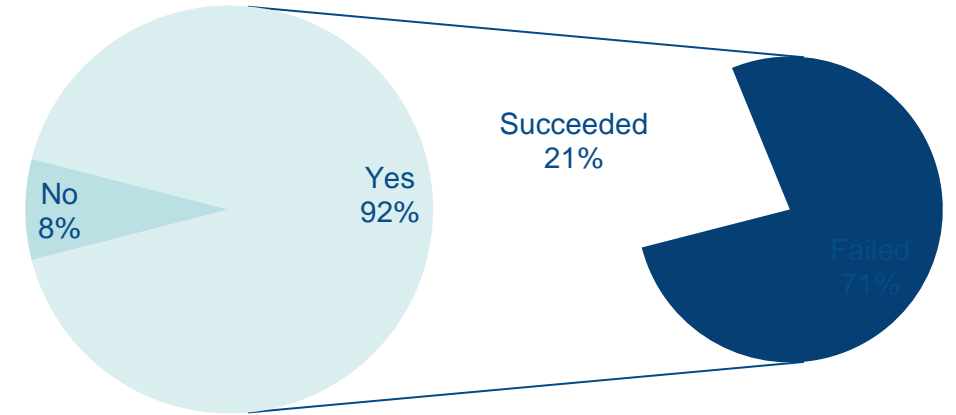
6-7 High

8-10 Very high

Results

- Only 21% of all patients ceased smoking on NCD announcement, while 71% reported a smoking cessation attempt with twice or more attempts in 52%.
 - In 80% of those who attempted smoking cessation, no known smoking cessation method was used except NRT-Patch in 10%.
 - Nicotine gum, nicotine losenge, nicotine nasal spray or inhaler, bupropion, and varenicline are not available in Tunisia.
- ▶ Impact of smoking on NCD was considered serious or very serious by only 52% of patients.
- ▶ Among smokers 56% reported being unwilling or not having time to consider serious smoking cessation program
- ▶ 70% of patients reported having been frequently advised by their physicians to stop smoking.

Previous smoking cessation attempt



Conclusion

- The tobacco control in Tunisia is still facing serious challenges.
- In Tunisia, most smokers continue cigarette-smoking despite having NCDs
- Current prevalence of smoking in Tunisian patients with NCDs remains high, indicating that the programs on the tobacco risk related knowledges need to be strengthened and the tobacco control needs more efforts.
- Given the limited health and economic resources in these settings, effective, scalable strategies for addressing NCDs are urgently needed.

Acknowledgment

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