

## Adolescent smokers are at greater risk for current asthma and rhinitis

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### RESUMEN

**BACKGROUND:** The association of tobacco smoke with the prevalence of asthma and rhinitis has not been well-characterized in adolescents. **METHODS:** As part of the International Study of Asthma and Allergies in Childhood (ISAAC), we conducted a cross-sectional survey of 3000 adolescents aged 13-14 years in northern Argentina. Data included questions about asthma and rhinitis symptoms and about parental and personal smoking. Logistic regression and Pearson  $\chi^2$  statistics were used to estimate these associations. **RESULTS:** Over 13% of respondents described themselves as current smokers, and half indicated that at least one parent smoked at home. Active smoking was associated with both asthma (OR 1.83, 95%CI 1.42-2.35) and rhinitis (OR 1.61, 95%CI 1.33-1.92) in unadjusted analysis. These associations persisted after adjusting for parental smoking status, mother's educational level and sex. Boys were significantly less likely than girls to report current asthma or rhinitis. **CONCLUSIONS:** Active and passive smoking are both risk factors for asthma and rhinitis in adolescents. Assuming that some children with asthma never started smoking due to symptoms, then the true risk could be higher than reported here. These results reinforce the need to develop better strategies for primary and secondary prevention of tobacco exposure in children.

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