What do Children with ADHD believe about Cigarette Smoking?

Kousha M, Kiani SA, Shoar Y and Shoar Z.


Abstract

ADHD (Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder) is a common psychiatric disorder in children and adolescents. Studies show that children and adolescents with ADHD are at a higher risk of smoking cigarettes and abusing substances at an earlier age of onset.

The main purpose of this study was to examine the attitude toward cigarette smoking in 7 to 12-year-old children with ADHD compared to their siblings without ADHD and a non-related control group in the same age range.

This was a comparative cross-sectional study performed in 2009 on three groups of 7 to 12-year-old children. Our study showed no significant difference between the three groups in regard to their attitude toward cigarette smoking, although children with ADHD had a more negative attitude toward smoking than the control groups. There was no significant difference between boys and girls. There was a negative correlation between age and attitude toward cigarette smoking ($r=-0.618$); as older children had a less negative attitude toward smoking. Although not significant, a relatively high number of children thought that cigarette smoking makes them fit and has a relaxing and calming effect at the time of stress.

Our findings of negative attitude toward cigarette smoking in 7 to 12-year-old children may imply that children can change their attitude toward cigarette smoking later in life. Adolescents under study showed a more positive attitude about being fit and feeling relaxed by cigarette smoking; although not statistically significant, but this may imply motor and mind restlessness and can be an indication for treatment of ADHD symptoms. The results of this study could be a preliminary step for conducting more studies to determine groups of children with higher risks for future cigarette smoking and the critical age for planning the prevention programs.