

THE EFFICACY OF SMOKING CESSATION INTERVENTIONS VIA SOCIAL MEDIA

In regard to the Cobb et al.¹ article, *Diffusion of an Evidence-Based Smoking Cessation Intervention Through Facebook: A Randomized Controlled Trial*, I agree that a widespread intervention modality via social media could assist in smoking cessation for a large number of people. However, without results indicating increased smoking cessation rates by individuals using an application on a social media site, it is difficult to fathom that such a means is an effective strategy. While Facebook definitely has the ability to quickly diffuse information to a substantial amount of people, it lacks the system needed to motivate people into wanting to quit smoking.

As the article mentions, social media plays a major role in the amplification of “trends.” The results of the study showed this through adequate participation in downloading and referring friends to the smoking cessation application via Facebook. The results of the study did not indicate whether participants were able to effectively quit smoking by using the application alone or by applying alternate smoking cessation interventions in addition to the Facebook application.

Overall, the study’s major limitation is the inability to support the clinical relevance of smoking cessation through the use of an application through Facebook. While Facebook can make a large number of people aware of an intervention program for smoking cessation at a rapid rate, an intervention modality that simply guides patients through a computer monitor may not be effective enough to get people to quit smoking. *AJPH*

Eddy Lopez, PA-S

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Eddy Lopez is a Master of Medical Science student at Nova Southeastern University, Fort Myers, FL.

Correspondence should be sent to Eddy Lopez, 6008 31st Avenue South, Tampa, FL 33619 (e-mail: EL755@nova.edu). Reprints can be ordered at <http://www.ajph.org> by clicking the “Reprints” link.

This letter was accepted September 19, 2016.
doi: 10.2105/AJPH.2016.303491

REFERENCES

1. Cobb NK, Jacobs MA, Wileyto P, Valente T, Graham AL. Diffusion of an evidence-based smoking cessation intervention through Facebook: a randomized controlled trial. *Am J Public Health*. 2016;106(6):1099–1100.

EDITOR’S NOTE

Cobb et al. declined to respond.

Letters to the editor referring to a recent *AJPH* article are encouraged up to 3 months after the article’s appearance. By submitting a letter to the editor, the author gives permission for its publication in *AJPH*. Letters should not duplicate material being published or submitted elsewhere. The editors reserve the right to edit and abridge letters and to publish responses.

Text is limited to 400 words and 7 references. Submit online at www.editorialmanager.com/ajph. Queries should be addressed to the Editor-in-Chief, Alfredo Morabia, MD, PhD, at editorajph@qc.cuny.edu.