



**Smoking and suicidal behaviors in a sample of US adults
with low mood:
a prospective analysis**

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6 **Smoking and suicidal behaviors in a sample of US adults with low mood:**
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9 **a prospective analysis**
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ABSTRACT

Objective: To investigate whether: 1) smoking predicts suicide related outcomes (SRO) independently of socio-demographic and psychiatric risk factors, 2) smoking abstinence affects the suicide risk, 3) the relationship is bi-directional.

Design: Longitudinal data obtained in Wave 1 (2001-2002) and Wave 2 (2004-2005) of the National Epidemiologic Survey of Alcohol and Related Conditions.

Setting: Face-to-face interviews conducted with persons in the community.

Participants: US adults (43,093) aged 18 years or older were interviewed in Wave 1; 34,653 participants were re-interviewed three years later. For the present study, the sample was the subset of persons (N=7,352) who at the Wave 2 interview answered affirmatively regarding the presence of low mood lasting two weeks or more during the past three years. Females were 64.1%; the ethnic/racial distribution was White=71.4%, Blacks=10.6%; Hispanic =11.2%; Asian/Pacific Islander = 3.5%; American Indian = 3.3%.

Main outcome measures: SRO composed of any of three items: 1) want to die, 2) suicidal ideation, 3) suicide attempt.

Results: Current and former smoking in Wave 1 predicted increased risk for Wave 2 SRO independently of socio-demographic characteristics, psychiatric history, and prior SRO measured in Wave 1 (Adjusted Odds Ratio (AOR) =1.41, 95% CI=1.28 to 1.55 for current smoking, and 1.32, 95% CI=1.21 to 1.43 for former smoking). In comparisons with persistent non-smokers, risk for future SRO was highest among relapsers (AOR=3.42, 95% CI=2.85 to 4.11); next highest among beginning smokers (AOR=1.82, 95% CI=1.51 to 2.19); and lowest among long-term (four+ years) former smokers (AOR=1.22, 95% CI=1.12-1.34). In comparisons with

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3 persistent current smokers, risk reduction was evident with long-term ($p=0.0001$) but not shorter-
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5 term ($p=0.17$) abstinence. A bi-directional relationship was not observed.
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8 **Conclusion:** Suicidal behaviour is another harmful consequence of smoking. Further research
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10 is needed to understand how regular smoking and smoking abstinence affect the risk of SRO.
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55 INTRODUCTION
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Suicide is a leading cause of death worldwide. Close to one million persons die from suicide each year. The World Health Organization predicts that by 2020 suicide deaths will rise to 1.5 million (1). Completed suicides are largely predicted by the wish to die, thoughts of suicide, and unsuccessful previous suicidal attempts (2), making it important to understand the risks posed by suicide related outcomes (SRO). A history of mental disorders (3-5) and particular demographic characteristics (female gender, younger age, unmarried status, and unemployment) are putative risk factors for suicide and SRO (2). Tobacco use, long known as a major risk factor for numerous medical illnesses (6), and recently, for psychiatric outcomes as well (7, 8) has received increasing attention for its potential contribution to the risk of completed suicides and SRO (9). The veracity and dynamics of such a pernicious relationship has implications for suicide prevention. Smoking is a modifiable behaviour; reducing the prevalence of smoking may offer a pathway towards reducing the suicide rate.

A link between smoking and suicide was observed as early as 1976 by Doll and Peto in their study of mortality due to smoking in male British doctors (10). Numerous clinical and epidemiological studies that subsequently investigated the issue are in general, but not universal, agreement in finding a significant association between smoking and suicide and suicidal behaviors. Three studies based on cross-sectional epidemiological data that used the nicotine dependence diagnosis to assess smoking behavior found a positive association between smoking and SRO (11-13); none could infer causality, however, due to lack of information on the relative timing between smoking behaviors and the SRO. More relevant to the aims of the present study are the findings from several longitudinal studies which utilized community based data. Three of those prospective studies (14-16) found that current smoking predicted suicidal behaviors even after controlling for the effects of demographic and psychiatric variables; four studies did not

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3 find a positive relationship (17-20). The effect of smoking abstinence on risk of SRO is also
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5 unclear. A study of young adults followed for 10 years found that current, but not past, cigarette
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7 smoking predicted suicidal thoughts and attempt (14). Another study found that former smokers
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9 initially showed higher age-adjusted incidence rates of suicidal ideation compared to non-
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11 smokers (16); however, after more extensive adjustment with depressive disorder, anxiety
12
13 symptoms, and alcohol dependence, the difference was no longer statistically significant. A
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15 study based on data from the NESARC Wave 1 initially found that longer duration of abstinence
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17 decreased risk for SRO, but this effect disappeared upon controlling for psychiatric comorbidity
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19 (21). A protective or exacerbating impact of smoking abstinence on the risk of suicide-related
20
21 behaviors would have considerable significance for promoting and managing smoking cessation
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23 attempts and preventing SRO and suicide. A further question of theoretical and practical
24
25 importance is whether there is mutual causation between smoking and suicidal behaviors. In
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27 longitudinal data obtained from adolescents, the single study that has addressed this question
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29 thus far found that smoking predicted subsequent suicidal ideation and suicide attempts but prior
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31 suicidality was not associated with subsequent smoking (15).
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39 The present study was conducted to address these conundrums of the smoking-suicide
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41 relationship: 1) whether smoking predicts SRO independently of putative demographic and
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43 psychiatric risk factors, 2) whether smoking abstinence, and its corollary, duration of smoking
44
45 abstinence affects the suicide risk, and 3) whether the relationship is uni- or bi-directional.
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47 Important methodological conditions permitting valid assessment of these questions were
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49 present, concomitantly, in the two-wave format of the National Epidemiological Survey of
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51 Alcohol and Related Conditions (NESARC) (22): a longitudinal design, a large sample, and
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53 extensive data on important potential confounders. In addition, access to a sample of persons
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3 with low mood, who are recognized to have a greater probability of experiencing suicidal
4 behaviours (3, 4), provided the more sensitive context for detecting a more valid and precise
5 estimate of the risk potential of smoking for future SRO (23).
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10 11 12 METHODS:

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15 Sample: The NESARC interviews were conducted with persons in households, military
16 personnel living off base, and individuals living in group quarters such as boarding houses,
17 shelters, and college dorms. Data were collected to obtain a representative national sample of
18 US adults. In Wave 1 (2001-2002), face-to-face interviews were completed with 43,093 persons
19 aged 18 years or older. The overall response rate was 81.0%. Blacks, Hispanics, and young
20 adults (18-24 years) were oversampled. The Wave 1 sample was re-interviewed in Wave 2
21 (2004-2005) three years later (mean interval=36.6 months, s.e.=2.62) with an overall response
22 rate based on the Wave 1 sample of 86.7% (N=34,653). Data for the present study were obtained
23 from a subset (N=7,352) comprised of persons who answered affirmatively at the Wave 2
24 interview to the question concerning the presence of low mood and, as a result, were further
25 queried regarding the occurrence of an SRO during the three years prior to the Wave 2 interview.
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41 The NESARC sample size was chosen to be sufficiently large to produce nationally
42 representative proportions for the study of substance abuse and dependence and mental disorders
43 by demographic group with confidence intervals equal to or smaller than extant studies. The
44 NESARC study used a complex survey design and sampling weights upon responses to adjust
45 for sample selection procedures, non-response from selected households or individuals,
46 oversampling (of young adults, Blacks, and Hispanics), and non-response at the Wave 2 time
47 point. The weights and survey design effects have been incorporated into the following results.
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3 Other methodological details of the NESARC Wave 1 and Wave 2 studies have been described
4 extensively elsewhere (24-26).
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8 Variables: The dependent variable was SRO, comprised by the items on want to die,
9 suicidal ideation, suicidal attempt reported in Wave 2, measured as a dichotomous variable (none
10 of the three=0; any of the three=1). The main predictor variable was smoking status in Wave 1,
11 i.e., non-smoker, former smoker, or current smoker. A non-smoker had responded “No” to each
12 of the questions regarding lifetime use of at least 100 cigarettes, at least 50 cigars, smoked a pipe
13 at least 50 times, used snuff at least 20 times, and used chewing tobacco at least 20 times.
14
15 Following the coding rule used in the NESARC, all tobacco users were labelled as smokers for
16 the present analysis. A former smoker was defined as a “Yes” responder to the prior questions
17 who also reported having stopped smoking or tobacco use at least one year ago. A current
18 smoker was a “Yes” respondent who had smoked or used tobacco within the past year. Users of
19 cigars, pipes, snuff, or chewing tobacco who did not smoke cigarettes comprised 2% (129/7352)
20 of the sample.
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24 The smoking status variable (i.e., never, former, current) rather than nicotine dependence
25 was selected to assess tobacco use history because: 1) the adequacy of the DSM-IV criteria,
26 followed in the AUDADIS-IV, as a valid measure of nicotine dependence remains controversial
27 (27,28), and 2) response to the question on never, current or former smoking is easier to elicit in
28 the clinical setting, with more validity, than responses to a multi-item measure of tobacco use for
29 which no consensus, stand-alone instrument yet exists (27, 28). To categorize respondents' long-
30 term or recent status as former or current smokers, a smoking change variable was created with
31 the following subgroups according to their report of smoking at Waves 1 and 2: 1) non-smoker
32 to non-smoker, 2) former smoker to former smoker, 3) current smoker to former smoker, 4)
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3 current smoker to current smoker, 5) non-smoker to current smoker, 6) former smoker to current
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6 smoker, and 7) non-smoker to former smoker.

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8 Covariates considered potential confounders or effect modifiers because of their known
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10 correlations with smoking and/or SRO and measured at Wave 1 were: demographic
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12 characteristics (age, gender, race/ethnicity, marital status, education, employment status, income,
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14 urban residence, geographic region), the DSM-IV Axis I and Axis II disorders, and prior SRO.
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16 The Axis I disorders were categorized into lifetime mood disorders (major depressive disorder,
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18 dysthymia, bipolar I and bipolar II), anxiety disorders (panic disorder, social phobia, specific
19
20 phobia, post-traumatic stress disorder, generalized anxiety disorder), alcohol use disorders
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22 (alcohol abuse or dependence), and other substance use disorders (drug abuse or dependence). A
23
24 history of Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), queried only at Wave 2, was used
25
26 among the Wave 1 predictors, its lifetime quality presumed since the DSM-IV criteria for ADHD
27
28 include the presence of ADHD symptoms before age seven. All ten of the Axis II personality
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30 disorders measured in AUDADIS-IV (shown in Table 1) were included as well.
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37 Assessment: For both Waves 1 and 2, the Alcohol Use Disorder and Associated
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39 Disabilities Interview Schedule (AUDADIS-IV) was administered by interviewers from the U.S.
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41 Census Bureau. The reliability and validity of the DSM-IV diagnoses obtained through the
42
43 AUDADIS-IV have been demonstrated in clinical and general samples in the U.S. and in other
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45 countries (29).
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49 Statistical Analysis: Percentages for categorical independent variables were calculated
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51 within the analytical, at-risk, sample (Table 1) and the complementary Wave 2 sample (no low
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53 mood, Supplemental Data Table S1). For the at-risk sample, the crude effects on Wave 2 SRO of
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55 individual Wave 1 variables were assessed by unadjusted odds ratios (OR) and 95% confidence
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3 intervals (CI) obtained from univariate logistic regressions. To control for potential confounding
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5 and determine the independent effects of the latter predictor variables on Wave 2 SRO, multiple
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7 logistic regression models were performed and adjusted odds ratios (AOR) and 95% confidence
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9 intervals (CI) were obtained. A complementary regression as specified in Granger (30) was
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11 used to test the opposite temporal relationship – that is, whether prior SRO exerted an effect on
12
13 current smoking status in Wave 2. All models were estimated with the PROC
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15 SURVEYLOGISTIC function of SAS statistical software version 9.2, with the results verified
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17 through an internal statistical review at the U.S. Census Bureau.
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22 For most demographic control variables, missing values, reported in Table 1, were
23
24 replaced through imputation. The exception to this method was for the identification of suicide
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26 related outcomes (SRO), where the 12-18 individuals reporting “unknown” for the three SRO-
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28 defining questions in Wave 2 were set to “no” responses for the purposes of classification. We
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30 conducted sensitivity analysis (a) comparing results from the at-risk subsample to those from the
31
32 entire Wave 2 NESARC sample, (b) using different measurements of smoking status (including
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34 additional quitting cut points in time for short-term cessation), (c) using different categorizations
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36 of changes in smoking status, (d) using different sets of control variables with and without
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38 education, Axis II personality disorders, and census region, and (e) including help-seeking
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40 behavior controls.
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48 RESULTS

49 *Sample characteristics at Wave 1*

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52 The prevalence of any SRO was 25.6%. Prevalence rates for individual SROs were
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54 23.4% for “wish to die”, 19.3% for “suicidal ideation”, and 6.1% for “suicide attempt”. By
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3 smoking status, 31.7% were current smokers, 17.8% were former smokers, and 50.5% were
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5 never smokers. Weighted percentages and standard errors for categories of the study variables
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7 are shown in Table 1, Columns 1 and 2.
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10 Distributions from the at-risk sample (N=7,352) and from the complementary sample of
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12 27,301 Wave 2 respondents (shown in Supplemental Data Table S1) were compared. The
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14 complementary sample had included respondents who were skipped out of the SRO section of
15
16 the interview because they did not report depressed mood. Chi-squared tests found statistically
17
18 significant differences between the at-risk and the complementary samples for all of the variables
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20 reported in the supplemental table, a function of the large sample sizes and the survey design
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22 effects of the NESARC. Confirming the at-risk status of the analytical sample, the prevalence
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24 rates of the psychiatric disorders (DSM-IV Axis I and Axis II) were markedly higher among
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26 them than the rest of the sample. Other demographic characteristics previously associated with
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28 higher risk of suicide and SROs were also higher in the at-risk subsample: more females, more
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30 lower and fewer high income responders, fewer married, and more separated or never married,
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32 and more unemployed individuals. Differences by race/ethnicity, age, urban versus rural
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34 residence, and geographic area were also observed.
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43 *Effects of Wave 1 predictors on Wave 2 SRO*

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45 For reference, the unadjusted odds ratios and 95% CI for risk of future SRO of individual
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47 study variables, indicating relationships uncontrolled for covariance effects are shown in Table 1,
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49 Columns 3 and 4. The adjusted odds ratios and 95% CI based on a multivariate model on Wave
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51 2 SRO, controlling for covariance from the Wave 1 predictors, are shown in Table 1, Columns 5
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3 The adjusted analysis showed significantly higher risk for Wave 2 SRO of both Wave 1
4 current smokers (AOR=1.41, 95% CI= 1.28-1.55) and former smokers (AOR=1.32, 95%
5 CI=1.21-1.43) relative to nonsmokers. The difference in point estimates of risk between current
6 versus former smokers was not significant ($\chi^2=1.95$, $p = 0.16$).
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12 The multivariate model also showed significant, independent risk for future SRO for
13 female gender, Hispanic race/ethnicity, young age, cohabiting/divorced/separated marital status,
14 lower income, being unemployed, residence other than the Northeast region. Having reported a
15 SRO in Wave 1 was the strongest predictor of reporting a Wave 2 SRO (AOR=3.49, 95% CI=
16 3.18- 3.84). Of the DSM-IV Axis I disorders, only anxiety disorders (AOR= 1.08, 95% CI=1.01-
17 1.17) and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (AOR=1.56, 95% CI=1.36-1.79) showed
18 significant independent prediction of Wave 2 SRO. The adjusted odds ratio for mood disorders
19 indicated a decreased risk of future SRO (AOR= 0.77, 95% CI= 0.70-0.84), in contrast to the
20 increased risk observed in the simple regression (OR=2.04, 95% CI=1.92-2.17). Likewise, the
21 significant predictive effects on Wave 2 SRO for the alcohol use disorders and the substance use
22 disorders seen in the simple regressions were not apparent in the multivariate model.
23
24 Significantly elevated risk for Wave 2 SRO was seen for only three of the DSM-IV Axis II
25 disorders: borderline personality, schizotypal, and avoidant personality. Ranked in decreasing
26 order, the statistically significant predictors of SRO risk, other things being equal, in the present
27 sample of adults reporting low mood were: prior SRO, borderline personality disorder, ADHD,
28 schizotypal disorder, current smoking, former smoking, avoidant personality disorder, and
29 selected demographic characteristics.
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55 *Smoking status change from Wave 1 to Wave 2: effects on Wave 2 SRO*
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3 Table 2 shows that the great majority of the sample (90.5%) did not change their smoking
4 status between Waves 1 and 2. Among the remaining 9.5%, over half (5.3%) had made a shift
5 from being current smokers to former smokers; more than a fourth (2.6%) were non-smokers in
6 Wave 1 who became current smokers in Wave 2; and a much smaller proportion (<2%) were
7 former smokers in Wave 1 who relapsed to smoking in Wave 2. A seventh category, non-
8 smokers in Wave 1 who reported former smoking status in Wave 2, produced a sample size that
9 was too small for further assessment.
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20 Table 2 shows the risk for SRO among all categories of ever-smokers compared to the
21 persistent non-smokers. The highest risk was seen for smokers who had relapsed (former to
22 current smoker) (AOR=3.42, 95% CI=2.85-4.11); the new smokers (non-smoker to current
23 smoker) showed the next highest risk (AOR=1.82, 95% CI=1.51-2.19); and the persistent former
24 smokers (reported abstinence status at both Wave 1 and 2 interviews) showed the lowest risk
25 (AOR=1.22, 95% CI=1.12-1.34).
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37 *Long-term abstinence, relapse, and new smoking*

38 The risk for Wave 2 SRO of a) long-term quitters relative to recent quitters and b) that of
39 new current smokers in Wave 2 (relapsed or began to smoke) relative to the risk of smokers
40 during both study Waves was examined. Given the three-year interval between Waves 1 and 2
41 and the coding requirement that former smoking status is assigned only upon reporting of at least
42 12 months of abstinence, persons in Category 2 of Table 2 (former to former smokers) would
43 have been abstinent for at least four years. Persons who shifted from current smoking in Wave
44 1 to former smoking in Wave 2 (Category 3) would have been abstinent for a maximum of three
45 years. Pair-wise chi squared tests for equality of the coefficients compared the AOR among the
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3 group categories, as shown below Table 2. The lower risk of recent former smokers (Category
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5 3) when compared to the persistent current smokers (Category 4) was not significant ($p=0.26$),
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8 whereas the lower risk of long-term smokers (Category 2) compared to the persistent current
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10 smokers (Category 4) was significant ($p=0.0001$). These data suggest that a reduction in risk for
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12 future SRO with past smoking, relative to current smoking, becomes apparent only after a
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14 considerable period of smoking abstinence.
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18 The second comparison which focused on new smoking in Wave 2 found that, relative to
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20 persistent current smokers, those who relapsed or began to smoke in Wave 2 had significantly
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22 higher risks for Wave 2 SRO than the persistent current smokers ($p=0.0001$, $p=0.04$,
23
24 respectively).
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27 28 29 *Is there a bi-directional relationship?* 30

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32 Section A in Table 3 shows the results of multivariate models for predicting Wave 2 SRO
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34 as a function of smoking in Wave 1 and other Wave 1 covariates. Section B in Table 3 shows
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36 results for predicting Wave 2 current smoking as a function of SRO history in Wave 1 and other
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38 Wave 1 covariates, following the Granger test for directional causality (30). As in Table 1, Table
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40 3A shows a predictive effect of Wave 1 current smoking and former smoking on Wave 2 SRO.
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42 Table 3B shows that persons with Wave 1 SROs were *less* likely to report current smoking status
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44 at Wave 2 ($AOR=0.81$, $95\% CI=0.72-0.90$). These results refute the hypothesis of a bi-
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47 directional temporal relationship whereby there might be mutual causation between SRO and
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49 smoking.
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53 To understand these temporal relationships further, the effects of the interaction of Wave
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55 1 smoking status (current vs. nonsmoker and former vs. nonsmoker) with history of prior SRO
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3 (Table 4, Panels A and B) were examined. The outcome variable in Table 4, Panel A is Wave 2
4 SRO; the outcome variable in Table 4, Panel B, is Wave 2 current smoking. In each model, the
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6 reference group comprised the non-smokers with no prior SRO at Wave 1.
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10 Table 4, Panel A shows the following: 1) in the presence of prior SRO, the risk for Wave
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12 2 SRO is much higher across the smoking categories (for current, former, and non-smokers,
13 (AORs > 3.5) than for their counterparts with no prior SRO; 2) in the absence of prior SRO, the
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15 risk estimates for Wave 2 SRO among current and former smokers in Wave 1 are significantly
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17 higher (95% CI are 1.41-1.74 and 1.28-1.57, respectively) compared to the reference group
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19 (while notably lower than their counterparts with prior SRO), 3) also in the absence of prior
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21 SRO, the risk for Wave 2 SRO among Wave 1 former smokers is lower than for Wave 1 current
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23 smokers (AORs=1.42 and 1.56, respectively), but the difference is small and not statistically
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25 significant (Wald chi-square=2.69, p-value = 0.101). Thus, other characteristics (e.g.,
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27 demographics and psychopathology) being equal, current smoking and former smoking are valid
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29 predictors of an *initial* SRO; however, once a person has had a SRO, the risk of *recurrence* is
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31 fully predicted by that prior SRO and smoking status information does not significantly adjust
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33 the risk prediction.
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41 The predictive model on Wave 2 current smoking in Panel B of Table 4 shows that, as
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43 would be expected, Wave 1 current smokers, regardless of prior SRO, have a considerably
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45 higher risk of being a current smoker in Wave 2 compared to the reference group of Wave 1
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47 nonsmokers with no prior SRO. Wave 1 former smokers with no prior SRO showed a
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49 significantly higher risk for current smoking in Wave 2 (AOR=2.20; 95% CI=1.77- 2.31); by
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51 contrast, their counterparts with prior SRO did not (AOR=1.15; 95% CI=0.83, 1.61).
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55 Nonsmokers with prior SRO showed a risk for Wave 2 SRO that was lower than nonsmokers
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3 without prior SRO. Thus, the effects of prior SRO upon current smoking at Wave 2 differ by
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5 smoking status at Wave 1 – no net effect of prior SRO upon among smokers, but, for former
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7 smokers and nonsmokers, prior SROs predicted a *reduction* in the likelihood of current smoking
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9 in Wave 2. Overall, analysis of the interaction of prior SRO and Wave 1 smoking status shows
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11 nuances but does not fundamentally change the finding from the analysis of main effects seen in
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13 Table 2 that smoking predicts increased risk of SRO but the reverse relationship does not hold.
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20 DISCUSSION

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22 The main findings of the present study are: 1) smoking history, whether current or past,
23
24 increases the risk for SRO independently of demographics, psychiatric factors, and prior SRO; 2)
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26 long-term smoking abstinence can reduce that risk; 3) new smoking due to relapse after a period
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28 of abstinence or to current smoking among former non-smokers was associated with an increased
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30 risk of SRO relative to persistent current smoking; 4) the smoking-suicide relationship is not bi-
31
32 directional.
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36 Strengths and limitation of the study are worth noting. An important strength is the
37
38 concomitance of rigorous methods and materials not always present in prior work on the
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40 smoking-suicide question – face-to-face interviews, a longitudinal design, a validated instrument,
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42 a comprehensive range of putative predictors, and a large and clinically relevant sample that
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44 permitted statistical control of the key background factors and comorbidities. A further strength
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46 relevant to the real-world setting is the use of a simple yet meaningful measure of smoking status
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48 (i.e., never, former or current smoking status), that is easy for a questioner to administer and the
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50 respondent to recall and understand. At the same time, study limitations call for cautious
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52 interpretation of the findings. The survey excluded persons who had completed suicide attempts.
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3 Using the U.S. rate of 11.1 per 100,000 population per year (31), the Wave 1 sample of 43,093
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5 could be expected to include about 14 persons with completed suicides before Wave 2 (95% CI=
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7 6.8-21.6); introducing a non-trivial, although likely small, selection bias. Second, the present
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9 study sample comprised the self-selected 22% of the 34,653 NESARC Wave 2 participants who
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11 reported low mood during the three-year interval between the interviews. This selectivity yields
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13 findings relevant to mental health settings that are more likely to serve persons experiencing
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15 mood problems; however, they may not generalize to the rest of the NESARC sample or to the
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17 national population. Nevertheless, allowing for missing data from persons who did not report
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19 depressed mood, further analysis on the total sample using the same regression model applied to
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21 the present, at-risk sample also showed significant, although lower, predictive effects of current
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23 and former smoking history on future SRO (AOR=1.36, 95% CI=1.25-1.48 and AOR=1.18, 95%
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25 CI=1.08-1.28, respectively). Third, the present study did not assess the effects of medical
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27 conditions which are possibly causally related, albeit in different directions, to smoking and to
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29 SRO. A fourth limitation and a direction for further research is the aggregate nature of the
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31 dependent variable (i.e., SRO); analysis of individual SRO could yield more meaningful
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33 findings.
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41 Other than the present one, there have been seven prospective epidemiological studies of
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43 smoking and SRO (14-20). The positive prediction of future SRO reported here was also
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45 observed in three studies (14-16). Problems of recall due to the large, ten year interval between
46
47 data time points could explain the negative finding of the study by Kessler et al (17) while the
48
49 younger age of the samples in two studies (19-20), could have masked a future effect. Of
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51 clinical and public health importance is the finding, not reported in prior studies, that longer
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53 abstinence from smoking or tobacco exposure decreased the risk for SRO. The differential risk
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3 of SRO according to duration of abstinence observed in the present study but not considered in
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5 the two negative findings regarding past smoking (14, 16) could account for the inconsistent
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7 findings. Notably, the divergence of effects according to longevity of abstinence is consistent
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9 with evidence regarding lung cancer and other smoking-related disorders that risk reduction from
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11 stopping smoking occurs only after multiple years of abstinence (32, 33). Also a new finding
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13 made possible by the longitudinal nature of the data is the increased risk for future SRO among
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15 former smokers and nonsmokers in Wave 1 who relapsed or began to smoke in Wave 2
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17 compared to persistent current smokers. Although both latter effects occurred in small
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19 proportions of the sample, their observed impact on future SRO was high. Relapse and new
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21 smoking during adulthood could be signals of a future SRO. Finally, the data did not indicate a
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23 reverse temporal relationship, as also seen in the study of adolescents (15). Former and non-
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25 smokers with prior SRO in Wave 1 showed lower risk for current smoking in Wave 2 compared
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27 to their counterparts with no prior SRO. Perhaps those former and non-smokers, already inclined
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29 towards the more healthy behaviour of not smoking, were spurred by the prior SRO to undertake
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31 therapeutic actions which included avoidance of smoking. Of interest, exploratory analysis of
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33 Wave 1 data revealed a significant correlation ($r=0.43$, $p=0.0001$) between prior SRO and help-
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35 seeking during the last three years.
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43 This analysis provided clarifying information to the long-standing controversies
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45 regarding the effect of current smoking and past smoking on SRO, introduced new information
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47 regarding a protective effect of sustained abstinence for the purpose of reducing risk of SRO, and
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49 disconfirmed the hypothesis tested thus far only in an adolescent sample (15) of a bi-directional
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51 association between smoking and SRO. The neurobiological, genetic, psychiatric and
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53 psychological underpinnings of these observations and their invariance across segments of the
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3 wider population (i.e., by age groups, gender, race/ethnicity, cultural groups, and among healthy
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5 versus medically or psychiatrically ill persons) need further investigation. The worrisome, new
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7 observation of increased risk for SRO following relapse or new smoking among former non-
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9 smokers compared to persistent current smokers was observed in a very small proportion of the
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11 ever-smokers; replicating those findings in a larger sample would provide more assurance of
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13 their certainty and the need for therapeutic attention. Furthermore, since significant prediction
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15 from several factors acting as moderators (e.g., gender and race/ethnicity) or mediators (e.g.,
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17 psychiatric illness) was observed, the interactions of those covariates with smoking as they
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19 influence the risk of SRO warrant investigation. Finally, a prospective study of smoking and
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21 individual SRO (16) observed different levels of risk associated with suicidal ideation and
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23 combinations of ideation with suicidal plans and attempts. Thus, the findings yielded by the
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25 present focus on an aggregate measure of SRO warrant testing similar models as applied herein
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27 to the relationships between smoking and individual SRO and combinations of SRO.
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41 All authors have completed the Unified Competing Interest form
42
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44
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46
47 work; 3) IB received occasional honoraria for participating in advisory panels of Pfizer Ltd
48
49 during the last 3 years; in February, 2011; LC provided educational consultation to a law firm
50
51 regarding mood effects of smoking cessation; 4) JK and MH had no relationships with any
52
53 company that might have an interest in the submitted work in the previous 3 years; 5) none of the
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3 spouses of the authors had financial relationships that may be relevant to the submitted work; 6)
4
5 none of the authors had a non-financial interest that may be relevant to the submitted work.
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8
9 Lirio Covey and Ivan Berlin conceptualized this study and, with Mei-Chen Hu, designed the
10 analysis. Jahn Hakes had full access to all of the data in the study and takes responsibility for the
11 integrity of the data and the accuracy of the data analysis. Lirio Covey was the lead writer of the
12 manuscript. All authors participated in the interpretation of findings and writing of the
13 manuscript. All authors had full access to the statistical reports, tables, and the manuscript; and
14 take responsibility for the integrity of the data and the accuracy of the data analysis.
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17 The employers of the authors had no role in the study design, implementation of the study,
18 analysis and interpretation of data, in the writing of the report, and the decision to submit the
19 article for publication.
20
21

22 The study is a secondary analysis of data collected by the National Institute of Health-National
23 Institute of Alcohol and Alcohol Abuse of the US government. Before data collection, each
24 respondent was informed of the nature of the survey and its potential uses, ensured of
25 confidentiality, and told that participation was voluntary. All participants signed a consent form
26 prior to participating in the interviews. The US Census Bureau and the US Office of
27 Management and Budget reviewed and approved the ethics protocol. Individual data files are
28 de-identified to prevent full anonymity of participants. Approval for conducting this secondary
29 analysis of previously collected data was not required.
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32 In order to safeguard sensitive personal information, NESARC data are not available for public
33 use. The restricted use data sets are maintained by the U.S. Census Bureau on behalf of NIAAA,
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and any requests to use NESARC data for replication or other purposes may be directed to the NIAAA coordinator for NESARC, Aaron White (whitea4@mail.nih.gov).

For peer review only

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Supplemental Data:

Table S1: Comparison of Wave 1 characteristics of the at-risk sample with the rest of the Wave 2 NESARC sample. Weighted percentages (%) and standard error (s.e)

Variable	Total Wave 2 sample %	s.e.	At-risk Sample %	s.e.	Rest of sample %	s.e.
Female	52.08	0.16	64.13	0.40	49.02	0.17
Race/Ethnicity						
White	70.93	0.24	71.39	0.40	70.81	0.25
Black	10.75	0.20	10.61	0.22	10.79	0.21
Hispanic	11.56	0.10	11.20	0.15	11.65	0.12
Asian/Pac. Islander	4.36	0.06	3.50	0.10	4.58	0.06
Amer. Indian/Alaska Native	2.40	0.11	3.29	0.20	2.17	0.11
Age: 18-19	4.02	0.07	4.47	0.15	3.91	0.08
20-29	17.78	0.14	19.28	0.30	17.40	0.15
30-44	30.90	0.17	32.28	0.29	30.54	0.18
45-64	31.08	0.15	31.64	0.24	30.94	0.17
65 and over	16.22	0.10	12.32	0.25	17.21	0.12
Household Income:						
Less than \$20,000	20.35	0.17	25.07	0.32	19.15	0.19
\$20,000 to \$34,999	19.62	0.13	20.84	0.27	19.31	0.15
\$35,000 to \$59,999	26.27	0.16	24.85	0.31	26.63	0.17
\$60,000 and over	33.76	0.16	29.24	0.33	34.91	0.17
Marital status:						
Married	59.81	0.17	54.75	0.35	61.10	0.17
Cohabiting	3.25	0.06	3.60	0.11	3.16	0.07
Widowed	6.04	0.07	5.37	0.12	6.21	0.08
Divorced	8.45	0.06	10.73	0.19	7.87	0.07
Separated	1.98	0.04	2.98	0.12	1.73	0.04
Never Married	20.46	0.17	22.57	0.33	19.93	0.17
Education:						
Less than HS	14.65	0.13	16.25	0.26	14.24	0.14
High School diploma	29.03	0.18	29.35	0.35	28.95	0.20
College	56.32	0.22	54.40	0.38	56.81	0.23
Unemployed	7.16	0.09	12.31	0.25	5.85	0.09
Urban	28.89	0.26	30.59	0.41	28.46	0.25
Northeast	19.67	0.08	18.57	0.15	19.95	0.10
Midwest	23.15	0.16	23.52	0.32	23.05	0.21
South	35.21	0.15	34.89	0.39	35.29	0.19
West	21.97	0.11	23.02	0.23	21.71	0.15

Table S1, continued.

Variable	Total W2 sample	(std. err.)	At-risk Proportion	(std. err.)	Rest of sample	(std. err.)
Alcohol Use Disorder	30.43	0.20	33.57	0.39	29.63	0.20
Substance Use Disorder	10.42	0.11	15.06	0.26	9.25	0.11
Nicotine Dependence	17.47	0.13	24.33	0.37	15.73	0.13
Anxiety disorder	17.88	0.17	31.00	0.34	14.55	0.17
Mood disorder	21.09	0.13	41.82	0.33	15.82	0.13
ADHD	2.51	0.06	5.82	0.19	1.67	0.05
Personality Disorders						
Borderline	5.89	0.08	18.44	0.28	2.70	0.07
Schizotypal	3.93	0.06	11.20	0.24	2.09	0.05
Narcissistic	6.18	0.08	11.88	0.23	4.74	0.08
Avoidant	2.32	0.05	6.14	0.17	1.36	0.05
Antisocial	3.63	0.07	5.86	0.21	3.07	0.07
Dependent	0.43	0.02	1.36	0.09	0.19	0.01
Obsessive-Compulsive	8.07	0.10	13.50	0.31	6.69	0.09
Paranoid	4.33	0.07	9.66	0.21	2.98	0.06
Schizoid	3.06	0.06	6.44	0.21	2.21	0.05
Histrionic	1.80	0.04	3.68	0.15	1.32	0.04
Any Axis I or Axis II Disorder	54.70	0.22	69.72	0.35	50.89	0.24
Smoking status:						
Current smoker – W1	27.02	0.17	31.65	0.38	25.85	0.19
Former smoker – W1	19.58	0.16	17.84	0.28	20.02	0.17
Never smoked – W1	53.40	0.19	50.51	0.42	54.13	0.20
Total	n=34,653		n= 7,352		n=27,301	

NOTES: Values for control variables in this table (demographics and psychiatric history) are taken from Wave 1 of NESARC, but weighted using W2WEIGHT, as inclusion in sample requires knowing whether respondent had an SRO between waves. All psychiatric disorders are assigned only a lifetime diagnosis.

STROBE Statement—Checklist of items that should be included in reports of *cohort studies*

	Item No	Recommendation
Title and abstract	1	(a) Indicate the study's design with a commonly used term in the title or the abstract (b) Provide in the abstract an informative and balanced summary of what was done and what was found
Introduction		
Background/rationale	2	Explain the scientific background and rationale for the investigation being reported
Objectives	3	State specific objectives, including any prespecified hypotheses
Methods		
Study design	4	Present key elements of study design early in the paper
Setting	5	Describe the setting, locations, and relevant dates, including periods of recruitment, exposure, follow-up, and data collection
Participants	6	(a) Give the eligibility criteria, and the sources and methods of selection of participants. Describe methods of follow-up (b) For matched studies, give matching criteria and number of exposed and unexposed
Variables	7	Clearly define all outcomes, exposures, predictors, potential confounders, and effect modifiers. Give diagnostic criteria, if applicable
Data sources/ measurement	8*	For each variable of interest, give sources of data and details of methods of assessment (measurement). Describe comparability of assessment methods if there is more than one group
Bias	9	Describe any efforts to address potential sources of bias
Study size	10	Explain how the study size was arrived at
Quantitative variables	11	Explain how quantitative variables were handled in the analyses. If applicable, describe which groupings were chosen and why
Statistical methods	12	(a) Describe all statistical methods, including those used to control for confounding (b) Describe any methods used to examine subgroups and interactions (c) Explain how missing data were addressed (d) If applicable, explain how loss to follow-up was addressed (e) Describe any sensitivity analyses
Results		
Participants	13*	(a) Report numbers of individuals at each stage of study—eg numbers potentially eligible, examined for eligibility, confirmed eligible, included in the study, completing follow-up, and analysed (b) Give reasons for non-participation at each stage (c) Consider use of a flow diagram
Descriptive data	14*	(a) Give characteristics of study participants (eg demographic, clinical, social) and information on exposures and potential confounders (b) Indicate number of participants with missing data for each variable of interest (c) Summarise follow-up time (eg, average and total amount)
Outcome data	15*	Report numbers of outcome events or summary measures over time
Main results	16	(a) Give unadjusted estimates and, if applicable, confounder-adjusted estimates and their precision (eg, 95% confidence interval). Make clear which confounders were adjusted for and why they were included (b) Report category boundaries when continuous variables were categorized (c) If relevant, consider translating estimates of relative risk into absolute risk for a meaningful time period

Other analyses	17	Report other analyses done—eg analyses of subgroups and interactions, and sensitivity analyses
Discussion		
Key results	18	Summarise key results with reference to study objectives
Limitations	19	Discuss limitations of the study, taking into account sources of potential bias or imprecision. Discuss both direction and magnitude of any potential bias
Interpretation	20	Give a cautious overall interpretation of results considering objectives, limitations, multiplicity of analyses, results from similar studies, and other relevant evidence
Generalisability	21	Discuss the generalisability (external validity) of the study results
Other information		
Funding	22	Give the source of funding and the role of the funders for the present study and, if applicable, for the original study on which the present article is based

*Give information separately for exposed and unexposed groups.

Note: An Explanation and Elaboration article discusses each checklist item and gives methodological background and published examples of transparent reporting. The STROBE checklist is best used in conjunction with this article (freely available on the Web sites of PLoS Medicine at <http://www.plosmedicine.org/>, Annals of Internal Medicine at <http://www.annals.org/>, and Epidemiology at <http://www.epidem.com/>). Information on the STROBE Initiative is available at <http://www.strobe-statement.org>.

Table 1: Demographic characteristics, lifetime psychiatric and prior SRO (n=7352)^{§*}.
Frequencies, odds ratios, and adjusted odds ratios for Wave 2 SRO**

Variable	(1) Weighted mean %	(2) Standard error of mean	(3) OR	(4) 95% CI	(5) AOR	(6) 95% CI
Smoking history						
Current smoker in Wave 1	31.65	0.38	1.77	1.64, 1.90	1.41	1.28, 1.55
Former Smoker in Wave 1	17.84	0.28	1.16	1.07, 1.25	1.32	1.21, 1.43
Never Smoker in Wave 1	50.51	0.42	1.00		1.00	
Demographics						
Female	64.13	0.40	1.05	0.98, 1.12	1.13	1.04, 1.22
Male			1.00		1.00	
White	71.39	0.40	1.00		1.00	
Black	10.61	0.22	0.91	0.84, 0.99	0.84	0.76, 0.92
Hispanic	11.20	0.15	1.10	1.04, 1.17	1.26	1.16, 1.36
Asian/Pacific Islander	3.50	0.10	0.74	0.67, 0.82	0.93	0.82, 1.06
American Indian	3.29	0.20	0.94	0.71, 1.25	0.69	0.51, 0.92
Age 18-19	4.47	0.15	1.00		1.00	
Age 20-29	19.28	0.30	0.83	0.69, 0.98	0.77	0.63, 0.94
Age 30-44	32.28	0.29	0.75	0.64, 0.88	0.73	0.60, 0.90
Age 45-64	31.64	0.24	0.66	0.56, 0.78	0.69	0.56, 0.84
Age 65 and over	12.32	0.25	0.47	0.39, 0.57	0.68	0.54, 0.86
Married	54.75	0.35	1.00		1.00	
Cohabiting	3.60	0.11	1.67	1.42, 1.96	1.27	1.07, 1.51
Widowed	5.37	0.12	0.97	0.85, 1.10	0.92	0.78, 1.07
Divorced	10.73	0.19	1.70	1.57, 1.84	1.20	1.10, 1.32
Separated	2.98	0.12	1.85	1.58, 2.15	1.29	1.06, 1.56
Never married	22.57	0.33	1.35	1.24, 1.46	0.97	0.87, 1.09
Less than High School	16.25	0.26	1.17	1.04, 1.32	1.09	0.95, 1.25
High School Diploma	29.35	0.35	1.00		1.00	
Some College or more	54.40	0.38	0.94	0.87, 1.02	1.08	1.00, 1.17
Household income:						
Less than \$20,000	25.07	0.32	1.71	1.57, 1.85	1.31	1.18, 1.44
\$20,000 to \$34,999	20.84	0.27	1.41	1.30, 1.52	1.18	1.07, 1.30
\$35,000 to \$59,999	24.85	0.31	1.30	1.20, 1.42	1.21	1.11, 1.32
\$60,000 and over	29.24	0.33	1.00		1.00	
Unemployed	12.31	0.25	1.84	1.68, 2.03	1.28	1.13, 1.45
Northeast	18.57	0.15	1.00		1.00	
Midwest	23.52	0.32	1.34	1.25, 1.42	1.33	1.21, 1.46
South	34.89	0.39	1.18	1.09, 1.27	1.14	1.04, 1.25
West	23.02	0.23	1.24	1.16, 1.33	1.25	1.15, 1.35
Urban	30.59	0.41	1.08	1.02, 1.15	1.03	0.97, 1.10
Rural			1.00			

Table 1, continued.

Variable	(1) Weighted mean %	(2) Standard error of mean	(3) OR	(4) 95% CI	(5) AOR	(6) 95% CI
Psychiatric History						
Suicide related outcomes In Wave 1	25.55	0.27	3.84	3.60, 4.10	3.49	3.18, 3.84
Lifetime Axis I Disorders						
Alcohol Use	33.57	0.39	1.40	1.31, 1.49	0.95	0.87, 1.04
Substance Use	15.06	0.26	1.75	1.61, 1.89	0.98	0.88, 1.09
Anxiety	31.00	0.34	1.72	1.62, 1.83	1.08	1.01, 1.17
Mood	41.82	0.33	2.04	1.92, 2.17	0.77	0.70, 0.84
Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder	5.82	0.19	2.87	2.56, 3.22	1.56	1.36, 1.79
Personality Disorders						
Borderline	18.44	0.28	4.49	4.22, 4.77	2.91	2.69, 3.16
Schizotypal	11.20	0.24	3.44	3.09, 3.84	1.50	1.31, 1.72
Narcissistic	11.88	0.23	2.08	1.89, 2.29	1.03	0.92, 1.14
Avoidant	6.14	0.17	2.97	2.66, 3.32	1.29	1.05, 1.58
Antisocial	5.86	0.21	1.89	1.68, 2.13	0.85	0.72, 1.01
Dependent	1.36	0.09	3.44	2.74, 4.30	1.04	0.76, 1.41
Ob-Com	13.50	0.31	1.53	1.39, 1.69	0.90	0.80, 1.00
Paranoid	9.66	0.21	2.37	2.14, 2.62	0.95	0.82, 1.10
Schizoid	6.44	0.21	2.10	1.89, 2.33	1.01	0.88, 1.16
Histrionic	3.68	0.15	2.10	1.82, 2.43	0.76	0.63, 0.93

§ Missing observations for specific variables: Race – 43, Hispanic origin – 2, age – 13, marital status-4, educational attainment – 70, household income-2544, unemployed – 28, Wave 2 individual suicide related outcomes – 12-18 “unknown” change to “no”. Treatment of unknown values in determination of psychiatric diagnosis variables is known only to original NESARC project staff at NIAAA.

*Persons reporting low mood and responding to questions on suicide related outcomes at the NESARC Wave 2 interview.

**SRO (Suicide related outcome: feel like want to die, suicide ideation, suicide attempt; 0=None, 1=any SRO).

Notes: n=7352. Odds Ratios (OR) based on simple regression models estimating Wave 2 SRO as a function of an individual predictor variable. Adjusted Odds Ratios (AOR) based on a multiple logistic regression estimating Wave 2 SRO as a function of age, sex, race/ethnicity, marital status, income, education, unemployed status, Census region, urban residence, smoking status, Axis I and Axis II disorders (as described in text), and lifetime SRO prior to Wave 1.

Table 2: Smoking status change as reported in NESARC Wave 1 and Wave 2 interviews: effects on Wave 2 suicide related outcomes (SRO)*

Smoking status in Wave 1 to Wave 2	N	Weighted relative frequency (std. err.)	Wave 2 SRO*	
			AOR	(95% CI)
1. Nonsmoker to Nonsmoker	3653	47.8 (0.40)	1.00	
2. Former to Former smoker	1185	16.4 (0.26)	1.22	(1.12, 1.34)
3. Current to Former smoker	393	5.3 (0.14)	1.37	(1.16, 1.63)
4. Current to Current smoker	1824	26.3 (0.35)	1.50	(1.35, 1.66)
5. Nonsmoker to Current smoker	194	2.6 (0.10)	1.82	(1.51, 2.19)
6. Former to Current smoker	(S)	< 2.0	3.42	(2.85, 4.11)
	N=7352			

*Includes wish to die, suicide ideation, suicide attempt

Notes: N=7352. AORs are adjusted odds ratios based on multiple logistic regression of Wave 2 SRO as a function of age, sex, race/ethnicity, marital status, income, education, unemployed status, Census region, urban residence, smoking status, Axis I and Axis II disorders (as described in text), and lifetime SRO prior to Wave 1.

The seventh category which consisted of persons who transitioned through a period of smoking to become a former smoker during the last 12 months in Wave 2 produced a sample size that was too small for a valid assessment of risk..

(S)= statistic suppressed to prevent identification of related cell values.

Chi-squared tests for equality of coefficients:

Smoking status change groups	chi-squared stat.	p-value
2 v. 3	1.86	0.17
3 v. 4	1.26	0.26
4 v. 5	4.11 *	0.04
5 v. 6	19.0 *	< .0001
2 v. 4	16.9 *	< .0001
4 v. 6	56.0*	<.0001

*=Statistically significant at 95% confidence level

Table 3: Effect of smoking status and history of SRO^a reported at NESARC Wave 1 interview on: a) Wave 2 SRO^a, and b) Wave 2 current smoking.

	a) ave 2 SRO ^a		b) ave 2 Current Smoking	
	AOR*	(95% CI)	AOR*	(95% CI)
Current smoker	1.41	(1.28, 1.55)	89.1	(80.3, 98.9)
Former smoker	1.32	(1.21, 1.43)	1.93	(1.72, 2.18)
Wave 1 SRO ^a	3.49	(3.18, 3.84)	0.81	(0.72, 0.90)

^aSRO includes wish to die, suicidal ideation, suicide attempt.

*Adjusted odds ratio from multiple logistic regression models controlling for demographics and psychiatric history reported at Wave 1 (shown in Table 1)

Table 4 Panel A: Combined AOR* effects of Wave 1 smoking status and Wave 1 SRO^a upon Wave 2 SRO

	Current smoker, Wave 1		Former smoker, Wave 1		Nonsmoker, Wave 1	
	AOR	95% CI	AOR	95% CI	AOR	95% CI
Wave 1 SRO	4.77	3.70-5.87	4.58	3.60-5.82	4.12	3.65-4.64
No Wave 1 SRO	1.56	1.41, 1.74	1.42	1.28-1.57	1.00	CI=N.A. ^b

Table 4 Panel B: Combined AOR* effects of Wave 1 smoking status and Wave 1 SRO* upon Wave 2 Current smoking

	Current smoker, Wave 1		Former smoker, Wave 1		Nonsmoker, Wave 1	
	AOR	95% CI	AOR	95% CI	AOR	95% CI
Wave 1 SRO	76.98	57.60-104.8	1.15	0.83-1.61	0.70	0.60-0.82
No Wave 1 SRO	82.86	73.7-93.2	2.20	1.77-2.31	1.00	CI=N.A. ^b

^aSRO includes wish to die, suicidal ideation, suicide attempt

^bNot applicable

*Adjusted odds ratio from multiple logistic regression models controlling for demographics and psychiatric history reported at Wave 1 (shown in Table 1)



**Smoking and suicidal behaviors in a sample of US adults
with low mood:
a longitudinal analysis**

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6 **Smoking and suicidal behaviors in a sample of US adults with low mood:**
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9 **a longitudinal analysis**
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ABSTRACT

Objective: To investigate whether: 1) smoking predicts suicide related outcomes (SRO); 2) prior SRO predicts smoking, 3) smoking abstinence affects the risk of SRO, 4) psychiatric comorbidity modifies the relationship between smoking and SRO.

Design: Longitudinal data obtained in Wave 1 (2001-2002) and Wave 2 (2004-2005) of the National Epidemiologic Survey of Alcohol and Related Conditions.

Setting: Face-to-face interviews conducted with persons in the community.

Participants: US adults (N=43,093) aged 18 years or older, interviewed in Wave 1 and re-interviewed (N=34,653) three years later. For the present study, the sample was the subset of persons (N=7,352) who at the Wave 2 interview reported low mood lasting two weeks or more during the past three years and were further queried regarding SRO occurring between Waves 1 and 2.

Outcome measures: SRO composed of any of: 1) want to die, 2) suicidal ideation, 3) suicide attempt, reported at Wave 2. Current smoking reported at Wave 2.

Results: Current and former smoking in Wave 1 predicted increased risk for Wave 2 SRO independently of prior SRO, psychiatric history, and socio-demographic characteristics measured in Wave 1 (Adjusted Odds Ratio (AOR) =1.41, 95% CI=1.28 to 1.55 for current smoking; AOR=1.32, 95% CI=1.21 to 1.43 for former smoking). Prior SRO did not predict current smoking in Wave 2. Compared with persistent never smokers, risk for future SRO was highest among relapsers (AOR=3.42, 95% CI=2.85 to 4.11); next highest among smoking beginners at Wave 2 (AOR=1.82, 95% CI=1.51 to 2.19); and lowest among long-term (four+ years) former smokers (AOR=1.22, 95% CI=1.12 to 1.34). Compared with persistent current

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3 smokers, risk for SRO was lower among long-term ($p < 0.0001$), but not shorter-term ($p = 0.26$)
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5 abstinence.
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8 **Conclusion:** Smoking increased the risk of future SRO independently of psychiatric
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10 comorbidity. Abstinence of several years duration reduced that risk.
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12 **Word count= 294**
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Article Summary

Article focus

To investigate longitudinally among persons reporting low mood lasting two weeks or more during the past three years whether:

- smoking predicts suicide related outcomes (want to die, suicidal ideation, suicide attempt); prior suicide related outcomes predict smoking,
- smoking abstinence affects the risk of suicide related outcomes,
- psychiatric comorbidity modifies the relationship between smoking and suicide related outcomes.

Key messages

- Current and former smoking (less than 4 years' reported abstinence) predicted increased risk for suicide related outcomes independently of prior suicide related outcomes, psychiatric history, and socio-demographic characteristics.
- Prior suicide related outcomes did not predict future current smoking.
- Compared with persistent current smokers, risk of suicide related outcomes was reduced with long-term (≥ 4 years) but not with shorter-term (< 4 years) abstinence.

Strengths and limitations

Strengths

- Face-to-face interviews, a longitudinal design, a large sample, a validated diagnostic instrument, a comprehensive range of putative predictors that permitted statistical control of the key background factors and comorbidities.

Limitations

- Only persons with self-reported low mood were questioned about suicide related outcomes, consequently, no generalizability to other populations.
- The sample did not include persons who had completed suicide.
- No assessment of the effects of medical conditions which are possibly causally related to smoking and to suicide related outcomes.
- No information from adolescents, a high risk population for both smoking and suicide related outcomes.

INTRODUCTION

Suicide is a leading cause of death worldwide. Close to one million persons die from suicide each year. The World Health Organization predicts that by 2020 suicide deaths will rise to 1.5 million (1). Completed suicides are largely predicted by the wish to die, thoughts of suicide, and unsuccessful previous suicidal attempts (2), making it important to understand the risks posed by suicide related outcomes (SRO). A history of mental disorders (3-5) and particular demographic characteristics (female gender, younger age, unmarried status, and unemployment) are putative risk factors for suicide and SRO (2). Smoking, long known as a major risk factor for numerous medical illnesses (6), and recently, for psychiatric outcomes as well (7, 8) has received increasing attention for its potential contribution to the risk of completed suicides and SRO (9). Nevertheless, whether the association between smoking and suicidal behaviours is causal or correlational remains unclear.

A link between smoking and suicide was observed as early as 1976 by Doll and Peto in their study of mortality due to smoking in male British doctors (10). Clinical and epidemiological studies that subsequently investigated the issue are in general, but not universal, agreement in finding a significant association between smoking and suicide and suicidal behaviors. Among studies that focused on SRO, three that used cross-sectional epidemiological data found a positive correlational association between smoking and SRO (11-13). Of seven longitudinal studies that also utilized community based data, three (14-16) found that current smoking predicted suicidal behaviors even after controlling for the effects of demographic and psychiatric variables; four studies did not find a positive relationship (17-20).

The effect of smoking abstinence on risk of SRO is also unclear. A study of young adults followed for 10 years found that recent, but not pre-survey, cigarette smoking predicted suicidal

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3 thoughts and attempts (14). Another study showed higher incidence rates of suicidal ideation
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5 among former smokers than never smokers (16), but the difference was no longer significant
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7 after adjustment with depressive disorder, anxiety symptoms, and alcohol dependence. A study
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9 based on Wave 1 data from the National Epidemiological Survey of Alcohol and Related
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11 Conditions (NESARC) initially found that longer duration of abstinence decreased risk for SRO,
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13 but this effect disappeared upon controlling for psychiatric comorbidity (21).
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17 A further question of theoretical and practical importance is whether prior SRO increases
18
19 the risk of future smoking. In the single study that has addressed this question, longitudinal data
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21 obtained from adolescents showed that smoking predicted suicidal ideation and suicide attempts
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23 but prior suicidality was not associated with subsequent smoking (15).
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27 The present study was conducted to address these conundrums of the smoking-suicide
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29 relationship: 1) whether prior smoking predicts SRO; 2) whether prior SRO predicts smoking; 3)
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31 whether smoking cessation and its corollary, duration of smoking abstinence, affects risk for
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33 SRO, and 4) whether these relationships are independent of comorbid psychiatric illness. Also
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35 explored were the effects of smoking status changes between the two waves of the NESARC on
36
37 risk of future SRO. The two-wave format, the large sample, and extensive data on psychiatric
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39 comorbidity that characterized the NESARC (22) permitted assessment of these questions.
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43 The survey instrument had asked questions regarding the past occurrence of SRO – want
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45 to die, suicidal ideation, and suicide attempt, only of persons reporting low mood. This
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47 restriction limits the generalizability of findings to the general population, but the much higher
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49 occurrence of suicidal behaviours among persons with low mood (3, 4) provided a more
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51 sensitive context for detecting the risk potential of smoking for suicidal behaviours (23).
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METHODS

Sample: The NESARC data were collected to obtain a representative national sample of US adults. In Wave 1 (2001-2002), face-to-face interviews were completed with 43,093 persons aged 18 years or older. The overall response rate was 81.0%. The Wave 1 sample was re-interviewed in Wave 2 (2004-2005) three years later (mean interval=36.6 months, s.e.=2.62) with a response rate of 80.4% (N=34,653) based on the Wave 1 sample. The NESARC sample size was chosen to be sufficiently large to produce nationally representative proportions for the study of substance abuse and dependence and mental disorders by demographic group with confidence intervals equal to or smaller than extant studies. The NESARC study used a complex survey design and sampling weights upon responses to adjust for sample selection procedures, non-response from selected households or individuals, oversampling (of young adults, Blacks, and Hispanics), and non-response at the Wave 2 time point. The weights and survey design effects have been incorporated into the following results. Other methodological details of the NESARC have been described in published NESARC Source and Accuracy Statements (24, 25).

Data for the present study were obtained from a subset of persons (N=7,352) who reported low mood at the Wave 2 interview. The latter subsample is referred to herein and in the table as the “at-risk sample”. Persons who did not report low mood were skipped out of the SRO sections in Waves 1 and 2. The questions for low mood at the Wave 2 interview were: “Since your LAST interview in (month/year), have you ever had a time when you felt sad, blue, depressed, or down most of the time for at least 2 weeks?” and “Since your LAST interview, have you ever had a time, lasting at least 2 weeks, when you didn’t care about the things that you usually cared about, or when you didn’t enjoy the things you usually enjoyed?” At the Wave 1 interview, respondents were asked these same questions referenced to their *entire lifetime*.

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3 Variables: The outcome variables for this study were Wave 2 SRO and Wave 2 current
4 smoking. The main covariates were prior SRO and smoking status at Wave 1. The individual
5 SRO questions are: “During that time when (your mood was at its [sic] lowest/you enjoyed or
6 cared the least about things), did you ... feel like you wanted to die? think about committing
7 suicide? attempt suicide?” Responses to these items were summed to create the total SRO
8 question and measured as a dichotomous variable (none of the three=0; any of the three=1).
9 Respondents who did not report low mood in Wave 1 and were not asked the SRO questions
10 were assigned a value of 0 for prior SRO.
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22 The questions on tobacco use at Wave 1 are: “In your ENTIRE LIFE, have you ever . . .
23 (a) Smoked at least 100 cigarettes? (b) Smoked at least 50 cigars? (c) Smoked a pipe at least 50
24 times? (d) Used snuff, such as Skoal, Skoal Bandit [sic] or Copenhagen at least 20 times? (e)
25 Used chewing tobacco, such as Redman, Levi Garrett or Beechnut at least 20 times?” Persons
26 who smoked cigarettes, cigars and/or pipes, comprised (a weighted) 95.9% (3368/3497) of all
27 tobacco users. Following the coding rule of the NESARC, all tobacco users, including the 129
28 persons who reported using snuff or chewing tobacco only, were labelled as “smokers”. A *never*
29 *smoker* had responded “No” to each of the questions regarding lifetime use of at least 100
30 cigarettes, at least 50 cigars, smoked a pipe at least 50 times, used snuff at least 20 times, and
31 used chewing tobacco at least 20 times. A *former smoker* was a “Yes” responder to at least one
32 of the prior questions who also reported that he or she had not smoked or used tobacco in the
33 past 12 months. (N.B. Very few, if any, of this latter group would have been experiencing
34 withdrawal; thus, the current study is not an adequate test of post-cessation withdrawal as a
35 predictor of SRO). A *current smoker* was a “Yes” respondent who had smoked or used tobacco
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3 within the past 12 months. At the Wave 2 interview, these same questions on tobacco use were
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5 asked with regard to the period since the last interview (month/year).
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8 The smoking status variable (i.e., never, former, current) rather than DSM-IV defined
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10 nicotine dependence was selected to assess tobacco use because: 1) the adequacy of the DSM-IV
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12 criteria as a valid measure of nicotine dependence remains controversial (26, 27), and 2)
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14 response to the single question on smoking status is easier to elicit in the clinical setting, with
15
16 more validity, than responses to a multi-item measure of tobacco use for which no consensus,
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18 stand-alone, instrument yet exists (26, 27). To categorize long-term or recent status as never,
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20 former, or current smokers, a change variable was created with the following categories
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22 according to their report of smoking at Waves 1 and 2: 1) never smoker to never smoker, 2)
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24 former smoker to former smoker, 3) current smoker to former smoker, 4) current smoker to
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26 current smoker, 5) never smoker to current smoker, 6) former smoker to current smoker, and 7)
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28 never smoker to former smoker.
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34 Other potential confounders or effect modifiers because of their known correlations with
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36 smoking and/or SRO, measured at Wave 1, were: demographic characteristics (age, gender,
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38 race/ethnicity, marital status, education, employment status, income, urban residence, geographic
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40 region), and lifetime measures of DSM-IV Axis I and Axis II disorders. The Axis I disorders
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42 were categorized into mood disorders (major depression, dysthymia, bipolar I and bipolar II),
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44 anxiety disorders (panic disorder, social phobia, specific phobia, generalized anxiety), alcohol
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46 use disorders (alcohol abuse or dependence), and other substance use disorders (drug abuse or
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48 dependence). A history of Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), queried only at
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50 Wave 2, was used among the Wave 1 predictors, its lifetime quality presumed since the DSM-IV
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52 criteria for ADHD include the presence of ADHD symptoms before age seven. All ten of the
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3 Axis II personality disorders measured in AUDADIS-IV (shown in Table 1) were included as
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5 well.
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8 Assessment: For both Waves 1 and 2, the Alcohol Use Disorder and Associated
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10 Disabilities Interview Schedule (AUDADIS-IV) was administered by interviewers from the U.S.
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12 Census Bureau. The reliability and validity of the DSM-IV diagnoses obtained through the
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14 AUDADIS-IV have been demonstrated in clinical and general samples in the U.S. and in other
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16 countries (28).
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19 Statistical Analysis: Weighted percentages and standard errors measured the distribution
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21 of the covariates (demographic characteristics and lifetime psychiatric variables) reported at
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23 Wave 1 for the sample with low mood and for the complementary sample of persons with no low
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25 mood. Chi-squared tests were used to assess differences between comparison groups, e.g., the at-
26
27 risk sample and the complementary sample of NESARC participants who did not report low
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29 mood. Unadjusted and adjusted odds ratios (OR and AOR) and 95% confidence intervals (CI)
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31 were calculated from univariate logistic regressions and multivariate logistic regressions,
32
33 respectively, to assess prediction of Wave 2 SRO in the sample of persons reporting low mood.
34
35 respectively. The prevalence rates of SRO at Wave 2 by Wave 1 smoking status, prior SRO at
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37 Wave 1, and by all other covariates at Wave 1 were also calculated. The opposite temporal
38
39 relationship of prior SRO (reported in Wave 1) on future smoking (reported in
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41 Wave 2) was tested using the identical covariates for assessing predictors of Wave 2 SRO,
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43 following Granger (29). All models were estimated with the PROC SURVEYLOGISTIC
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45 function of SAS statistical software version 9.2, with the results verified through an internal
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47 statistical review at the U.S. Census Bureau.
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Missing values were replaced through imputation using assignment and allocation methods (24, 25). Sensitivity analyses were performed that included: comparison of the at-risk subsample to the complementary Wave 2 NESARC sample; using different sets of control variables with and without education, Axis II personality disorders, and census region; and including help-seeking behavior controls. These analyses did not change the associations between smoking and SRO reported below.

RESULTS

Wave 1 Characteristics

Table 1 shows weighted percentages by smoking status, SRO taken together and individually, demographic characteristics, and psychiatric disorders (DSM-IV Axis I and Axis II) in the sample of persons reporting low mood at Wave 1 and the rest of the NESARC sample. Current smoking, SRO, and the prevalence of psychiatric disorders were markedly higher among the low mood sample, confirming their at-risk status. Other demographic characteristics previously associated with higher risk of suicide and SROs were also higher in the low mood subsample: more females, more low and fewer high income responders, fewer married, and more separated or never married, and more unemployed individuals. Differences by race/ethnicity, age, urban or rural residence, and geographic area were also observed.

Effects of Wave 1 characteristics on Wave 2 SRO

From here on, reported statistics are for the sample of persons reporting low mood at Wave 2. The overall incidence rate of SRO (occurring between the Wave 1 and Wave 2 interviews) was 28.2% (s.e.=0.33%). Table 2 shows weighted percentages and odds ratios for Wave 2 SRO by smoking history, prior SRO, and the control variables as reported in Wave 1.

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3 Unadjusted odds ratios (OR) and 95% CI for future SRO are shown as reference points. The
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5 adjusted odds ratios (AOR) and 95% CI show significantly higher risk of Wave 2 SRO for both
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8 Wave 1 current smokers (AOR=1.41, 95% CI= 1.28, 1.55) and former smokers (AOR=1.32,
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10 95% CI=1.21, 1.43) relative to never smokers. The difference in point estimates of risk between
11
12 current versus former smokers was not significant ($\chi^2=1.95$, $p = 0.16$).
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15 The multivariate model showed that SRO in Wave 1 is the strongest predictor of a Wave
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17 2 SRO (AOR=3.49, 95% CI= 3.18, 3.84). Significant, independent risk of future SRO was also
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19 observed for individuals who were female, Hispanic, younger, cohabiting, divorced or separated,
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21 of lower income, unemployed, and resided outside the Northeast region. Of the DSM-IV Axis I
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23 disorders, only anxiety (AOR= 1.08, 95% CI=1.01, 1.17) and ADHD (AOR=1.56, 95% CI=1.36,
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25 1.79) showed significantly elevated risk of Wave 2 SRO; mood disorder was correlated with
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27 reduced Wave 2 SRO risk (AOR=0.77; 95% CI=0.70, 0.84). Three of the DSM-IV Axis II
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29 disorders, i.e., borderline personality, schizotypal, and avoidant personality, showed significantly
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31 increased risk for Wave 2 SRO.
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39 *Smoking status change from Wave 1 to Wave 2*

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41 The great majority of the sample (90.5%) did not change their smoking status as never,
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43 former, or current smoker, between Waves 1 and 2 (Table 3). Among the remaining 9.5%, over
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45 half (5.3%) had shifted from being current smokers to former smokers; more than a fourth
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47 (2.6%) were never smokers in Wave 1 who became current smokers in Wave 2; and a smaller
48
49 proportion (<2%) who were former smokers in Wave 1 relapsed to smoking in Wave 2.
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53 a) *Effects on Wave 2 SRO.* Table 3 shows adjusted odds ratios indicating significant
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55 risk for SRO among all categories of ever-smokers relative to the persistent never smokers. The
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3 highest risk was seen for relapsers (former smoker to current smoker) (AOR=3.42, 95%
4 CI=2.85, 4.11); new smokers (never smoker to current smoker) showed the next highest risk
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6 (AOR=1.82, 95% CI=1.51, 2.19); and long-term former smokers (during both Wave 1 and 2)
7
8 showed the least elevated, yet still significant, risk (AOR=1.22, 95% CI=1.12, 1.34). The
9
10 seventh category consisting of never smokers in Wave 1 who reported former smoker status in
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12 Wave 2 was too small for a valid analysis.
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17 b) *Comparative risks by abstinence duration, relapse, and new smoking.* Pair-wise
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19 chi-squared tests for equality of coefficients permitted a comparison of risk estimates for Wave
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21 2 SRO (shown in Table 3) between categories of smoking status change. Given the three-year
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23 interval between Waves 1 and 2 and the coding requirement that former smoking status is
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25 assigned only upon reporting of at least 12 months of abstinence, long-term former smokers
26
27 (Category 2, Table 3) would have been abstinent for at least four years. Persons who shifted
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29 from current smoking in Wave 1 to former smoking in Wave 2 (Category 3, Table 3) would
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31 have been abstinent for at least 12 months and a maximum of four years.
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36 The analysis showed that the AOR for Wave 2 SRO among recent former smokers
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38 (Category 3) did not differ from persistent current smokers (Category 4) ($\chi^2(1) = 1.26, p=0.26$).
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40 However, long-term former smokers (Category 2) showed a significantly lower AOR for Wave 2
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42 SRO than persistent current smokers ($\chi^2(1) = 16.9, p<0.0001$). These data suggest that a
43
44 reduction in risk for future SRO with past smoking becomes apparent after a considerable period
45
46 of abstinence. Of additional interest were the risk estimates associated with re-starting (i.e.
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48 relapse) and with beginning to smoke in Wave 2. Compared to persistent current smokers, the
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50 AOR for Wave 2 SRO was significantly higher for both relapsers ($\chi^2(1) = 56.00, p<0.0001$), and
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3 smoking beginners in Wave 2 ($\chi^2(1) = 4.11, p = 0.04$). Further, the AOR for Wave 2 SRO was
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5 significantly higher among relapsers than beginning smokers ($\chi^2(1) = 19.0, p < 0.0001$).
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10 *Does prior SRO predict smoking?*

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12 A multiple regression model on current smoking in Wave 2 was fit using the identical list
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14 of control variables for predicting Wave 2 SRO. This second model did not show a direct effect
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16 of prior SRO on Wave 2 current smoking. Persons with Wave 1 SROs were *less* likely to report
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18 current smoking status at Wave 2 than were persons who did not experience SRO in Wave 1
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20 (AOR=0.81, 95% CI=0.72, 0.90).
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25 To understand the temporal relationship between smoking and SRO, the effects of the
26
27 interaction of Wave 1 smoking status (current vs. never smoker and former vs. never smoker)
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29 with history of prior SRO were examined. Table 4 shows adjusted odds ratios from separate
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31 multiple regression models on SRO and on current smoking in Wave 2 for combined effects of
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33 smoking status and prior SRO reported in Wave 1. Never smokers without a prior SRO at Wave
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35 1 were the reference group in each model. These analyses did not fundamentally change the
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37 finding that smoking predicts increased risk of SRO and that the reverse relationship does not
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39 hold, but indicates nuanced impact of both SRO and smoking history.
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44 The model on Wave 2 SRO (Table 4 section a) shows that, other characteristics (e.g.,
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46 demographics and psychopathology) being equal: a) all combinations of smoking status and SRO
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48 history had statistically significant risks for Wave 2 SRO relative to never smokers without prior
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50 SRO; and b) for each smoking category, the risks were considerably greater when the combined
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52 group involved a prior SRO. The data also show that former smoking and current smoking, in
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54 the absence of prior SRO, are valid predictors of an *initial* SRO. However, once a person has had
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3 a SRO, smoking status history does not change the risk prediction - the risk of *recurrence* is fully
4 predicted by that prior SRO and the other characteristics. The second model, on Wave 2 current
5 smoking (Table 4 section b), shows an expectedly substantial likelihood of being a current
6 smoker in Wave 2 for current smokers in Wave 1, regardless of SRO history. By contrast, prior
7 SRO predicted a *reduction* in the likelihood of smoking uptake in Wave 2 for former smokers
8 and never smokers.
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20 DISCUSSION

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22 The main findings from the present sample of persons reporting low mood are: 1) current
23 and past smoking predicted increased risk for SRO independently of demographics, psychiatric
24 factors, and prior SRO; 2) long-term smoking abstinence was associated with lower risk than
25 persistent smoking; 3) new smoking due to relapse after a period of abstinence or to initiation of
26 smoking by erstwhile never smokers was associated with an increased risk of SRO relative to
27 persistent smoking; 4) prior SRO did not increase the risk of future smoking.
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36 For three Axis I disorders, i.e., mood, alcohol use, and substance use, the adjusted odds
37 ratios indicated either insignificant effects or a decreased risk of future SRO. These results differ
38 from the increased risks yielded in the unadjusted analyses, indicating confounding effects of
39 correlated predictors of SRO, for example, prior SRO and comorbid psychiatric disorders (3-5).
40 In further analysis excluding prior SRO in the multivariate regression model, a positive,
41 predictive effect of mood disorder on future SRO (AOR=2.05, 95% CI=1.92,2.17) was observed,
42 contrary to the reduced effect of mood disorder in the full model that adjusted for prior SRO
43 (results available upon request). This finding exemplifies an instance when collinearity with a
44 stronger predictor (e.g., Wave 1 SRO) overwhelmed the explanatory power of other predictors
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3 with weaker relationships. It is thus remarkable that significant effects of smoking on risk of
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5 SRO remained despite the evidence of effect suppression due to confounding. Ranked in
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7 decreasing order, the significant predictors of SRO risk in the present sample were: prior SRO,
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9 borderline personality disorder, ADHD, schizotypal disorder, current smoking, former smoking,
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11 avoidant personality disorder, and selected demographic characteristics.
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15 Other than the present one, there have been seven longitudinal epidemiological studies of
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17 smoking and SRO (14-20). The positive effect of current smoking on future SRO reported here
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19 was also observed in three studies (14-16). Problems of recall due to the long, ten year, interval
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21 between data time points could explain the negative finding of the study by Kessler et al (17);
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23 while the younger age of the samples in two studies (19-20) could have masked a future effect.
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25 Of clinical and public health importance is the finding, first reported here, that longer abstinence
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27 from smoking decreased the risk for SRO. The latter observation, not considered in two negative
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29 studies regarding past smoking (14, 16), could account for the inconsistent findings. Notably,
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31 the divergence according to longevity of abstinence is consistent with evidence for lung cancer
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33 and other smoking-related disorders that risk reduction from stopping smoking occurs only after
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35 multiple years of abstinence (31, 32). The worrisome observation that relapsers and new
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37 smokers are at even higher risk of future SRO than persistent smokers suggests particular targets
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39 for increased therapeutic attention. Finally, the data negated a reverse temporal relationship of
40
41 SRO on smoking, as also seen in a study of adolescents (15). Instead, a reduction in risk for
42
43 future smoking was observed among former and never smokers with prior SRO in Wave 1
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45 compared to their counterparts without prior SRO. Perhaps among those former and never
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47 smokers, already inclined towards the pro-health behaviour of not currently smoking, was a
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49 subset spurred by the prior SRO to undertake further health-promoting and therapeutic actions,
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3 which immunized them against future smoking. Their counterparts who did not experience a
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5 prior SRO were less likely to be as self-protective or to seek counselling and similar treatments,
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7 and were less immunized against resorting to new smoking. The serendipitous observation from
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9 the present sample that prior SRO and treatment seeking were well-correlated ($r=0.43$, $p=0.0001$)
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11 is consistent with that conjecture.
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15 Strengths and limitations of the study are noted. An important strength is the
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17 concomitance of rigorous methods and materials not found in prior work on the smoking-suicide
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19 question – face-to-face interviews, a longitudinal design, a large sample, a validated instrument,
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21 and a comprehensive range of putative predictors that permitted statistical control of the key
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23 background factors and comorbidities. A further strength is the use of a simple yet meaningful
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25 measure of smoking status (i.e., never, former or current smoking), that is easy for a questioner
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27 to administer and for the respondent to recall and understand. Even so, study limitations call for
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29 cautious interpretation of the findings. The present sample comprised the subgroup (22%) of
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31 Wave 2 participants ($N=34,653$) who self-reported low mood during the three-year interval
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33 between the interviews. This selectivity yields findings relevant to mental health settings that are
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35 likely to serve persons experiencing mood problems; however, they may not generalize to the
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37 rest of the NESARC sample or to the national population. Second, the sample did not include
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39 persons who had completed suicide attempts. Using the U.S. rate of 11.1 per 100,000 population
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41 per year (30), the Wave 1 sample of 43,093 could be expected to include about 14 persons with
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43 completed suicides before Wave 2 (95% CI= 6.8, 21.6), introducing a non-trivial, although likely
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45 small, selection bias. Third, the present study did not assess the effects of medical conditions
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47 which are possibly causally related, albeit in different directions, to smoking and to SRO. Fourth,
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49 the NESARC did not obtain information from adolescents, a subgroup with a known high risk
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3 for SRO (2). Finally, in exploratory, unadjusted, analyses, predictive effects of current smoking
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5 were observed across the individual SRO whereas past smoking predicted want to die and
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7 suicidal ideation, but not suicide attempt. Validation and articulation of these preliminary
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9 observations need to be accomplished in future work.
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13 The rigorous methodology employed in the NESARC gives eminent credence to the
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15 central findings of this analysis - an independent effect of smoking on SRO and the absence of a
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17 positive influence of prior SRO on future smoking. These results are consistent with the
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19 hypothesis that smoking exerts a contributing, and not simply a correlational, effect on risk of
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21 SRO. By contrast, these results are inconsistent with the hypothesis that SRO causes smoking or
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23 that a third factor causes both smoking and SRO. The neurobiological, genetic, psychiatric and
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25 psychological underpinnings of these associations warrant further investigation. The knowledge
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27 gained could advance prevention and treatment options for reducing the prevalence of tobacco
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29 use and suicide.
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41 **Manuscript word count= 4,136**
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3 spouses of the authors had financial relationships that may be relevant to the submitted work; 6)
4
5 none of the authors had a non-financial interest that may be relevant to the submitted work.
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9 Lirio Covey and Ivan Berlin conceptualized this study and, with Mei-Chen Hu, designed the
10 analysis. Jahn Hakes had full access to all of the data in the study and takes responsibility for the
11 integrity of the data and the accuracy of the data analysis. Lirio Covey was the lead writer of the
12 manuscript. All authors participated in the interpretation of findings and writing of the
13 manuscript. All authors had full access to the statistical reports, tables, and the manuscript; and
14 take responsibility for the integrity of the data and the accuracy of the data analysis. The U.S.
15 Census Bureau, NIAAA, and other employers of the authors had no role in the study design,
16 implementation of the study, analysis and interpretation of data, in the writing of the report, and
17 the decision to submit the article for publication.
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36 The study is a secondary analysis of data collected by the National Institute of Health-National
37 Institute of Alcohol and Alcohol Abuse of the US government. Before data collection, each
38 respondent was informed of the nature of the survey and its potential uses, ensured of
39 confidentiality, and told that participation was voluntary. All participants signed a consent form
40 prior to participating in the interviews. The US Census Bureau and the US Office of
41 Management and Budget reviewed and approved the ethics protocol. Individual data files are
42 de-identified to prevent full anonymity of participants. Approval for conducting this secondary
43 analysis of previously collected data was not required.
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3 In order to safeguard sensitive personal information, NESARC data are not available for public
4 use. The restricted use data sets are maintained by the U.S. Census Bureau on behalf of NIAAA,
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6 and any requests to use NESARC data for replication or other purposes may be directed to the
7
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10 NIAAA coordinator for NESARC, Aaron White (white4@mail.nih.gov).
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Table 1: Wave 1 characteristics of the low mood sample and the rest of the NESARC Wave 2 sample. Weighted percentages^a (%) and standard error (s.e)

Variable	Total Wave 2 sample %	s.e.	Low mood Sample ^b %	s.e.	Rest of sample ^c %	s.e.
Total n	34,653		7,352		27,301	
Smoking status						
Current smoker	27.02	0.17	31.65	0.38	25.85	0.19
Former smoker	19.58	0.16	17.84	0.28	20.02	0.17
Never smoker	53.40	0.19	50.51	0.42	54.13	0.20
Wave 1 Suicide related outcomes (SRO)						
Want to die	11.42	0.10	25.55	0.27	7.84	0.10
Suicidal ideation	10.17	0.10	23.35	0.26	6.82	0.10
Suicide ideation	8.42	0.09	19.27	0.27	5.66	0.09
Suicide attempt	2.35	0.04	6.09	0.17	1.40	0.04
Demographics						
Gender						
Female	52.08	0.16	64.13	0.40	49.02	0.17
Male	47.92	0.16	35.87	0.40	50.98	0.17
Race/Ethnicity						
White	70.93	0.24	71.39	0.40	70.81	0.25
Black	10.75	0.20	10.61	0.22	10.79	0.21
Hispanic	11.56	0.10	11.20	0.15	11.65	0.12
Asian/Pac. Islander	4.36	0.06	3.50	0.10	4.58	0.06
Amer. Indian/Alaska Native	2.40	0.11	3.29	0.20	2.17	0.11
Age:						
18-19	4.02	0.07	4.47	0.15	3.91	0.08
20-29	17.78	0.14	19.28	0.30	17.40	0.15
30-44	30.90	0.17	32.28	0.29	30.54	0.18
45-64	31.08	0.15	31.64	0.24	30.94	0.17
65 and over	16.22	0.10	12.32	0.25	17.21	0.12
Household Income:						
Less than \$20,000	20.35	0.17	25.07	0.32	19.15	0.19
\$20,000 to \$34,999	19.62	0.13	20.84	0.27	19.31	0.15
\$35,000 to \$59,999	26.27	0.16	24.85	0.31	26.63	0.17
\$60,000 and over	33.76	0.16	29.24	0.33	34.91	0.17
Marital status:						
Married	59.81	0.17	54.75	0.35	61.10	0.17
Cohabiting	3.25	0.06	3.60	0.11	3.16	0.07
Widowed	6.04	0.07	5.37	0.12	6.21	0.08
Divorced	8.45	0.06	10.73	0.19	7.87	0.07
Separated	1.98	0.04	2.98	0.12	1.73	0.04
Never Married	20.46	0.17	22.57	0.33	19.93	0.17

Education:						
Less than HS	14.65	0.13	16.25	0.26	14.24	0.14
High School diploma	29.03	0.18	29.35	0.35	28.95	0.20
College	56.32	0.22	54.40	0.38	56.81	0.23
Unemployed	7.16	0.09	12.31	0.25	5.85	0.09
Not unemployed	92.84	0.09	87.69	0.25	94.15	0.09
Urban	28.89	0.26	30.59	0.41	28.46	0.25
Rural/Not in Central City	71.11	0.26	69.41	0.41	71.54	0.25
Northeast	19.67	0.08	18.57	0.15	19.95	0.10
Midwest	23.15	0.16	23.52	0.32	23.05	0.21
South	35.21	0.15	34.89	0.39	35.29	0.19
West	21.97	0.11	23.02	0.23	21.71	0.15
Lifetime Psychiatric Disorders						
Axis I Disorders						
Alcohol Use	30.43	0.20	33.57	0.39	29.63	0.20
Substance Use	10.42	0.11	15.06	0.26	9.25	0.11
Nicotine Dependence	17.47	0.13	24.33	0.37	15.73	0.13
Anxiety disorder	17.88	0.17	31.00	0.34	14.55	0.17
Mood disorder	21.09	0.13	41.82	0.33	15.82	0.13
Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity	2.51	0.06	5.82	0.19	1.67	0.05
Axis II Disorders						
Borderline	5.89	0.08	18.44	0.28	2.70	0.07
Schizotypal	3.93	0.06	11.20	0.24	2.09	0.05
Narcissistic	6.18	0.08	11.88	0.23	4.74	0.08
Avoidant	2.32	0.05	6.14	0.17	1.36	0.05
Antisocial	3.63	0.07	5.86	0.21	3.07	0.07
Dependent	0.43	0.02	1.36	0.09	0.19	0.01
Obsessive-Compulsive	8.07	0.10	13.50	0.31	6.69	0.09
Paranoid	4.33	0.07	9.66	0.21	2.98	0.06
Schizoid	3.06	0.06	6.44	0.21	2.21	0.05
Histrionic	1.80	0.04	3.68	0.15	1.32	0.04

^aThe sampling weight variable in Wave 2 was used.

^bRespondents in NESARC Wave 2 who reported low mood lasting two weeks or more during the three-year interval covered in the Wave 2 NESARC and were asked the three suicidal behavior questions.

^cRespondents in NESARC Wave 2 who did not report low mood and were not asked the three suicidal questions.

Table 2: Percentage of suicide related outcomes (SRO)^a reported in Wave 2 by Wave 1 characteristics, and unadjusted and adjusted odds ratios for risk of Wave 2 SRO among persons reporting low mood at the NESARC Wave 2 interview. (N=7352)^b

Variable	% of Wave 2 SRO	Standard error	OR ^c	95% CI	AOR ^d	95% CI
Smoking history						
Current smoker in Wave 1	35.73	0.64	1.77	1.64, 1.90	1.41	1.28, 1.55
Former Smoker in Wave 1	26.68	0.67	1.16	1.07, 1.25	1.32	1.21, 1.43
Never Smoker in Wave 1	23.94	0.43	1.00		1.00	
SRO in Wave 1	50.01	0.76	3.84	3.60, 4.10	3.49	3.18, 3.84
Demographics						
Female	28.51	0.36	1.05	0.98, 1.12	1.13	1.04, 1.22
Male	27.54	0.59	1.00		1.00	
White	28.38	0.36	1.00		1.00	
Black	26.53	0.70	0.91	0.84, 0.99	0.84	0.76, 0.92
Hispanic	30.33	0.52	1.10	1.04, 1.17	1.26	1.16, 1.36
Asian/Pacific Islander	22.68	0.84	0.74	0.67, 0.82	0.93	0.82, 1.06
American Indian	27.18	2.81	0.94	0.71, 1.25	0.69	0.51, 0.92
Age 18-19	36.65	1.73	1.00		1.00	
Age 20-29	31.40	0.67	0.83	0.69, 0.98	0.77	0.63, 0.94
Age 30-44	29.32	0.62	0.75	0.64, 0.88	0.73	0.60, 0.90
Age 45-64	26.82	0.63	0.66	0.56, 0.78	0.69	0.56, 0.84
Age 65 and over	20.90	0.93	0.47	0.39, 0.57	0.68	0.54, 0.86
Married	24.87	0.49	1.00		1.00	
Cohabiting	35.58	1.67	1.67	1.42, 1.96	1.27	1.07, 1.51
Widowed	24.26	1.09	0.97	0.85, 1.10	0.92	0.78, 1.07
Divorced	36.01	0.84	1.70	1.57, 1.84	1.20	1.10, 1.32
Separated	37.93	1.78	1.85	1.58, 2.15	1.29	1.06, 1.56
Never married	30.87	0.69	1.35	1.24, 1.46	0.97	0.87, 1.09
Less than High School	31.58	0.92	1.17	1.04, 1.32	1.09	0.95, 1.25
High School Diploma	28.27	0.74	1.00		1.00	
Some College or more	27.08	0.35	0.94	0.87, 1.02	1.08	1.00, 1.17
Unemployed	39.93	1.17	1.84	1.68, 2.03	1.28	1.13, 1.45
Not unemployed	26.51	0.32	1.00		1.00	

Urban	29.30	0.38	1.08		1.03	0.97, 1.10
Rural	27.66	0.46	1.00	1.02, 1.15	1.00	
Lifetime Psychiatric Disorders						
Axis I Disorders						
Alcohol Use	32.74	0.60	1.40	1.31, 1.49	0.95	0.87, 1.04
Substance Use	38.42	0.94	1.75	1.61, 1.89	0.98	0.88, 1.09
Anxiety	37.57	0.60	1.72	1.62, 1.83	1.08	1.01, 1.17
Mood	36.62	0.48	2.04	1.92, 2.17	0.77	0.70, 0.84
Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder	51.14	1.42	2.87	2.56, 3.22	1.56	1.36, 1.79
Axis II Disorders						
Borderline	55.75	0.79	4.49	4.22, 4.77	2.91	2.69, 3.16
Schizotypal	53.41	1.26	3.44	3.09, 3.84	1.50	1.31, 1.72
Narcissistic	42.49	1.01	2.08	1.89, 2.29	1.03	0.92, 1.14
Avoidant	51.87	1.37	2.97	2.66, 3.32	1.29	1.05, 1.58
Antisocial	41.55	1.39	1.89	1.68, 2.13	0.85	0.72, 1.01
Dependent	56.90	2.90	3.44	2.74, 4.30	1.04	0.76, 1.41
Ob-Com	36.07	1.05	1.53	1.39, 1.69	0.90	0.80, 1.00
Paranoid	45.74	1.16	2.37	2.14, 2.62	0.95	0.82, 1.10
Schizoid	43.81	1.26	2.10	1.89, 2.33	1.01	0.88, 1.16
Histrionic	44.42	1.83	2.10	1.82, 2.43	0.76	0.63, 0.93

^aSRO (Suicide related outcome: feel like want to die, suicide ideation, suicide attempt; 0=None, 1=any SRO).

^bMissing observations for specific variables: Race – 43, Hispanic origin – 2, age – 13, marital status-4, educational attainment – 70, household income-2544, unemployed – 28, Wave 2 individual suicide related outcomes – 12-18 “unknown” changed to “no”. Treatment of unknown values in determination of psychiatric diagnosis variables is known only to original NESARC project staff at NIAAA.

^cOdds Ratios (OR) and 95% confidence intervals (CI) based on simple regression models estimating Wave 2 SRO as a function of an individual predictor variable.

^dAdjusted Odds Ratios (AOR) and 95% CI based on a multiple logistic regression estimating Wave 2 SRO as a function of age, sex, race/ethnicity, marital status, income, education, unemployed status, Census region, urban residence, smoking status, Axis I and Axis II disorders (as described in text), and lifetime SRO prior to Wave 1.

Table 3: Effects on Wave 2 suicide related outcomes (SRO) according to smoking status change as reported in NESARC Wave 1 and Wave 2 interviews.

Smoking status in Wave 1 to Wave 2	N	Weighted percentage ^b (standard error)	Wave 2 SRO ^a	
			AOR ^c	(95% CI)
1. Consistent never smoker (in Wave 1 and Wave 2)	3653	47.8 (0.40)	1.00	
2. Long-term former smoker (in Wave 1 and Wave 2)	1185	16.4 (0.26)	1.22	(1.12, 1.34)
3. Recent former smoker (current smoker in Wave 1, former smoker in Wave 2)	393	5.3 (0.14)	1.37	(1.16, 1.63)
4. Persistent current smoker (in Wave 1 and Wave 2)	1824	26.3 (0.35)	1.50	(1.35, 1.66)
5. New current smoker (never smoker in Wave 1, current smoker in Wave 2)	194	2.6 (0.10)	1.82	(1.51, 2.19)
6. Relapser (former smoker in Wave 1, current smoker in Wave 2)	95	1.5 (0.08)	3.42	(2.85, 4.11)
	N=7352 ^d			

^aAny of three items: want to die, suicidal ideation, suicide attempt

^bThe sampling weight variable in Wave 2 was used.

^cAORs are adjusted odds ratio with 95% confidence intervals (CI) based on multiple logistic regression of Wave 2 SRO as a function of age, sex, race/ethnicity, marital status, income, education, unemployed status, Census region, urban residence, smoking status, Axis I and Axis II disorders (as described in text), and lifetime SRO reported in Wave 1.

^dThe seventh group (n=8), which consisted of persons who were never smokers in Wave 1, began to smoke and then stopped smoking in Wave 2, was too small for a valid assessment of risk.

Table 4: Combined effects of smoking status and prior SRO^a reported in Wave 1 on a) Wave 2 SRO and b) Wave 2 current smoking

Wave 1 Smoking status and Wave 1 SRO	Frequency/ N	Weighted percentages (standard error)	AOR ^b	95% CI
a) Effect on Wave 2 SRO				
Never smoker - No prior SRO (referent)	550 /2978	17.5 (0.4)	1.00	N.A. ^c
Never smoker - Prior SRO	431 / 877	46.8 (1.0)	4.12	3.65,4.64
Former smoker - No prior SRO	187 / 968	20.6 (0.8)	1.42	1.28,1.57
Former smoker - Prior SRO	152 / 312	48.2 (1.6)	4.58	3.60,5.82
Current smoker - No prior SRO	383 /1466	26.6 (0.7)	1.56	1.41,1.74
Current smoker - Prior SRO	426 / 751	54.1 (1.2)	4.77	3.70,5.87
b) Effect on Wave 2 Current smoking				
Never smoker – No prior SRO (referent)	166 /2978	5.3 (0.2)	1.00	N.A. ^c
Never smoker –Prior SRO	28 / 877	4.3 (0.4)	0.70	0.60-0.82
Former smoker – No prior SRO	71 / 968	8.6 (0.5)	2.20	1.77-2.31
Former smoker – Prior SRO	24 / 312	6.9 (0.6)	1.15	0.83-1.61
Current smoker – No prior SRO	1204 /1466	82.7 (0.5)	82.9	73.7-93.2
Current smoker – Prior SRO	620 / 751	84.2 (0.8)	77.0	57.6-104.8

^aAny of three items: want to die, suicidal ideation, suicide attempt

^bAORs are adjusted odds ratios with 95% confidence intervals (CI) based on multiple logistic regression models controlling for demographics and psychiatric history at Wave 1 (shown in Table 1).

^cNot applicable

STROBE Statement—Checklist of items that should be included in reports of *cohort studies*

	Item No	Recommendation
Title and abstract	1	(a) Indicate the study's design with a commonly used term in the title or the abstract (b) Provide in the abstract an informative and balanced summary of what was done and what was found
Introduction		
Background/rationale	2	Explain the scientific background and rationale for the investigation being reported
Objectives	3	State specific objectives, including any prespecified hypotheses
Methods		
Study design	4	Present key elements of study design early in the paper
Setting	5	Describe the setting, locations, and relevant dates, including periods of recruitment, exposure, follow-up, and data collection
Participants	6	(a) Give the eligibility criteria, and the sources and methods of selection of participants. Describe methods of follow-up (b) For matched studies, give matching criteria and number of exposed and unexposed
Variables	7	Clearly define all outcomes, exposures, predictors, potential confounders, and effect modifiers. Give diagnostic criteria, if applicable
Data sources/ measurement	8*	For each variable of interest, give sources of data and details of methods of assessment (measurement). Describe comparability of assessment methods if there is more than one group
Bias	9	Describe any efforts to address potential sources of bias
Study size	10	Explain how the study size was arrived at
Quantitative variables	11	Explain how quantitative variables were handled in the analyses. If applicable, describe which groupings were chosen and why
Statistical methods	12	(a) Describe all statistical methods, including those used to control for confounding (b) Describe any methods used to examine subgroups and interactions (c) Explain how missing data were addressed (d) If applicable, explain how loss to follow-up was addressed (e) Describe any sensitivity analyses
Results		
Participants	13*	(a) Report numbers of individuals at each stage of study—eg numbers potentially eligible, examined for eligibility, confirmed eligible, included in the study, completing follow-up, and analysed (b) Give reasons for non-participation at each stage (c) Consider use of a flow diagram
Descriptive data	14*	(a) Give characteristics of study participants (eg demographic, clinical, social) and information on exposures and potential confounders (b) Indicate number of participants with missing data for each variable of interest (c) Summarise follow-up time (eg, average and total amount)
Outcome data	15*	Report numbers of outcome events or summary measures over time
Main results	16	(a) Give unadjusted estimates and, if applicable, confounder-adjusted estimates and their precision (eg, 95% confidence interval). Make clear which confounders were adjusted for and why they were included (b) Report category boundaries when continuous variables were categorized (c) If relevant, consider translating estimates of relative risk into absolute risk for a meaningful time period

1	Other analyses	17	Report other analyses done—eg analyses of subgroups and interactions, and
2			sensitivity analyses
3	Discussion		
4	Key results	18	Summarise key results with reference to study objectives
5	Limitations	19	Discuss limitations of the study, taking into account sources of potential bias or
6			imprecision. Discuss both direction and magnitude of any potential bias
7	Interpretation	20	Give a cautious overall interpretation of results considering objectives, limitations,
8			multiplicity of analyses, results from similar studies, and other relevant evidence
9	Generalisability	21	Discuss the generalisability (external validity) of the study results
10	Other information		
11	Funding	22	Give the source of funding and the role of the funders for the present study and, if
12			applicable, for the original study on which the present article is based

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*Give information separately for exposed and unexposed groups.

Note: An Explanation and Elaboration article discusses each checklist item and gives methodological background and published examples of transparent reporting. The STROBE checklist is best used in conjunction with this article (freely available on the Web sites of PLoS Medicine at <http://www.plosmedicine.org/>, Annals of Internal Medicine at <http://www.annals.org/>, and Epidemiology at <http://www.epidem.com/>). Information on the STROBE Initiative is available at <http://www.strobe-statement.org>.



**Smoking and suicidal behaviors in a sample of US adults
with low mood:
a retrospective analysis of longitudinal data**

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Manuscripts

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6 **Smoking and suicidal behaviors in a sample of US adults with low mood:**
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9 **a retrospective analysis of longitudinal data**
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11 **Lirio S. Covey^a, Ivan Berlin^b, Mei-Chen Hu^c, Jahn K. Hakes^d**
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ABSTRACT

Objective: To investigate whether: 1) smoking predicts suicide related outcomes (SRO); 2) prior SRO predicts smoking, 3) smoking abstinence affects the risk of SRO, 4) psychiatric comorbidity modifies the relationship between smoking and SRO.

Design: Retrospective analysis of longitudinal data obtained in Wave 1 (2001-2002) and Wave 2 (2004-2005) of the National Epidemiologic Survey of Alcohol and Related Conditions.

Setting: Face-to-face interviews conducted with persons in the community.

Participants: US adults (N=43,093) aged 18 years or older were interviewed in Wave 1 and re-interviewed (N=34,653) three years later. For the present study, the sample was the subset of persons (N=7,352) who at the Wave 2 interview reported low mood lasting two weeks or more during the past three years and were further queried regarding SRO occurring between Waves 1 and 2.

Outcome measures: SRO composed of any of: 1) want to die, 2) suicidal ideation, 3) suicide attempt, reported at Wave 2. Current smoking reported at Wave 2.

Results: Current and former smoking in Wave 1 predicted increased risk for Wave 2 SRO independently of prior SRO, psychiatric history, and socio-demographic characteristics measured in Wave 1 (Adjusted Odds Ratio (AOR) =1.41, 95% CI=1.28 to 1.55 for current smoking; AOR=1.32, 95% CI=1.21 to 1.43 for former smoking). Prior SRO did not predict current smoking in Wave 2. Compared with persistent never smokers, risk for future SRO was highest among relapsers (AOR=3.42, 95% CI=2.85 to 4.11); next highest among smoking beginners at Wave 2 (AOR=1.82, 95% CI=1.51 to 2.19); and lowest among long-term (four+ years) former smokers (AOR=1.22, 95% CI=1.12 to 1.34). Compared with persistent current

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2
3 smokers, risk for SRO was lower among long-term ($p < 0.0001$), but not shorter-term ($p = 0.26$)
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5 abstainers.
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7
8 **Conclusion:** Smoking increased the risk of future SRO independently of psychiatric
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10 comorbidity. Abstinence of several years duration reduced that risk.
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12 **Word count= 298**
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For peer review only

Article Summary

Article focus

To investigate among persons reporting low mood lasting two weeks or more during the past three years whether:

- smoking predicts suicide related outcomes (want to die, suicidal ideation, suicide attempt); prior suicide related outcomes predict smoking,
- smoking abstinence affects the risk of suicide related outcomes,
- psychiatric comorbidity modifies the relationship between smoking and suicide related outcomes.

Key messages

- Current and former smoking (less than 4 years' reported abstinence) predicted increased risk for suicide related outcomes independently of prior suicide related outcomes, psychiatric history, and socio-demographic characteristics.
- Prior suicide related outcomes did not predict future current smoking.
- Compared with persistent current smokers, risk of suicide related outcomes was reduced with long-term (≥ 4 years) but not with shorter-term (< 4 years) abstinence.

Strengths and limitations

Strengths

- Face-to-face interviews, a longitudinal design, a large representative sample, a validated diagnostic instrument, a comprehensive range of putative predictors that permitted statistical control of the key background factors and comorbidities.

Limitations

- Only persons with self-reported low mood were questioned about suicide related outcomes; consequently, no generalizability to other populations.
- The sample did not include persons who had completed suicide.
- No assessment of the effects of medical conditions which are possibly causally related to smoking and to suicide related outcomes.
- No information from adolescents, a high risk population for both smoking and suicide related outcomes.

INTRODUCTION

Suicide is a leading cause of death worldwide. Close to one million persons die from suicide each year. The World Health Organization predicts that by 2020 suicide deaths will rise to 1.5 million (1). Completed suicides are largely predicted by the wish to die, thoughts of suicide, and unsuccessful previous suicidal attempts (2), making it important to understand the risks posed by suicide related outcomes (SRO). A history of mental disorders (3-5) and particular demographic characteristics (female gender, younger age, unmarried status, and unemployment) are putative risk factors for suicide and SRO (2). Smoking, long known as a major risk factor for numerous medical illnesses (6), and recently, for psychiatric outcomes as well (7, 8) has received increasing attention for its potential contribution to the risk of completed suicides and SRO (9). Nevertheless, whether the association between smoking and suicidal behaviours is causal or correlational remains unclear.

A link between smoking and suicide was observed as early as 1976 by Doll and Peto in their study of mortality due to smoking in male British doctors (10). Clinical and epidemiological studies that subsequently investigated the issue are in general, but not universal, agreement in finding a significant association between smoking and suicide and suicidal behaviors. Among studies that focused on SRO, three that used cross-sectional epidemiological data found a positive correlational association between smoking and SRO (11-13). Of seven longitudinal studies that also utilized community-based data, three (14-16) found that current smoking predicted suicidal behaviors even after controlling for the effects of demographic and psychiatric variables; four studies did not find a positive relationship (17-20).

The effect of smoking abstinence on risk of SRO is also unclear. A study of young adults followed for 10 years found that recent, but not pre-survey, cigarette smoking predicted suicidal

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3 thoughts and attempts (14). Another study showed higher incidence rates of suicidal ideation
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5 among former smokers than never smokers, but the difference was no longer significant after
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7 adjustment with depressive disorder, anxiety symptoms, and alcohol dependence (16). A study
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9 based on Wave 1 data from the National Epidemiological Survey of Alcohol and Related
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11 Conditions (NESARC) initially found that longer duration of abstinence decreased risk for SRO,
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13 but this effect disappeared upon controlling for psychiatric comorbidity (21).
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17 A further question of theoretical and practical importance is whether prior SRO increases
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19 the risk of future smoking. In the single study that has addressed this question, longitudinal data
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21 obtained from adolescents showed that smoking predicted suicidal ideation and suicide attempts
22
23 but prior suicidality was not associated with subsequent smoking (15).
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27 The present study was conducted to address these conundrums of the smoking-suicide
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29 relationship: 1) whether prior smoking predicts SRO; 2) whether prior SRO predicts smoking; 3)
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31 whether smoking cessation and its corollary, duration of smoking abstinence, affects risk for
32
33 SRO, and 4) whether these relationships are independent of comorbid psychiatric illness. Also
34
35 explored were the effects of smoking status changes between the two waves of the NESARC on
36
37 risk of future SRO. The two-wave format, the large sample, and extensive data on psychiatric
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39 comorbidity that characterized the NESARC (22) permitted assessment of these questions.
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44 The survey instrument had asked questions regarding the past occurrence of SRO – want
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46 to die, suicidal ideation, and suicide attempt, only of persons reporting low mood. This
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48 restriction limits the generalizability of findings to the general population, but the much higher
49
50 occurrence of suicidal behaviours among persons with low mood (3, 4) provided a more
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52 sensitive context for detecting the risk potential of smoking for suicidal behaviours (23).
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METHODS

Sample: The NESARC data were collected to obtain a representative national sample of US adults. In Wave 1 (2001-2002), face-to-face interviews were completed with 43,093 persons aged 18 years or older. The overall response rate was 81.0%. The Wave 1 sample was re-interviewed in Wave 2 (2004-2005) three years later (mean interval=36.6 months, s.e.=2.62) with a response rate of 80.4% (N=34,653) based on the Wave 1 sample. The NESARC sample size was chosen to be sufficiently large to produce nationally representative proportions for the study of substance abuse and dependence and mental disorders by demographic group with confidence intervals equal to or smaller than extant studies. The NESARC study used a complex survey design and sampling weights upon responses to adjust for sample selection procedures, non-response from selected households or individuals, oversampling (of young adults, Blacks, and Hispanics), and non-response at the Wave 2 time point. Those weights and survey design effects, employed in other studies based on NESARC data, as well as other methodological details of Waves 1 and 2 are described in published NESARC Source and Accuracy Statements (24, 25).

Data for the present study were obtained from a subset of persons (N=7,352) who reported low mood at the Wave 2 interview, irrespective of low mood in Wave 1. This subsample was selected for the present analysis because it produced the largest number of persons from whom evaluable information for predicting Wave 2 SRO was available. The latter subsample is also referred to herein as the “at-risk sample”. Persons who did not report low mood were skipped out of the SRO sections in Waves 1 and 2. The questions for low mood at the Wave 2 interview were: “Since your LAST interview in (month/year), have you ever had a time when you felt sad, blue, depressed, or down most of the time for at least 2 weeks?” and “Since

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3 your LAST interview, have you ever had a time, lasting at least 2 weeks, when you didn't care
4 about the things that you usually cared about, or when you didn't enjoy the things you usually
5 enjoyed?" At the Wave 1 interview, respondents were asked these same questions referenced to
6 their *entire lifetime*.
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12 Variables: The outcome variables for this study were Wave 2 SRO and Wave 2 current
13 smoking. The main covariates were prior SRO and smoking status at Wave 1. The individual
14 SRO questions are: "During that time when (your mood was at its [sic] lowest/you enjoyed or
15 cared the least about things), did you ... feel like you wanted to die? think about committing
16 suicide? attempt suicide?" Responses to these items were summed to create the total SRO
17 question and measured as a dichotomous variable (none of the three=0; any of the three=1).
18 Respondents who did not report low mood in Wave 1 and were not asked the SRO questions
19 were assigned a value of 0 for prior SRO.
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32 The questions on tobacco use at Wave 1 are: "In your ENTIRE LIFE, have you ever . . .
33 (a) Smoked at least 100 cigarettes? (b) Smoked at least 50 cigars? (c) Smoked a pipe at least 50
34 times? (d) Used snuff, such as Skoal, Skoal Bandit [sic] or Copenhagen at least 20 times? (e)
35 Used chewing tobacco, such as Redman, Levi Garrett or Beechnut at least 20 times?" Persons
36 who smoked cigarettes, cigars and/or pipes, comprised (a weighted) 95.9% (3368/3497) of all
37 tobacco users. Following the coding rule of the NESARC, all tobacco users, including the 129
38 persons who reported using snuff or chewing tobacco only, were labelled as "smokers". A *never*
39 *smoker* had responded "No" to each of the questions regarding lifetime use of at least 100
40 cigarettes, at least 50 cigars, smoked a pipe at least 50 times, used snuff at least 20 times, and
41 used chewing tobacco at least 20 times. A *former smoker* was a "Yes" responder to at least one
42 of the prior questions who also reported that he or she had not smoked or used tobacco in the
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3 past 12 months. (N.B. Very few, if any, of this latter group would have been experiencing
4 withdrawal; thus, the current study is not an adequate test of post-cessation withdrawal as a
5 predictor of SRO). A *current smoker* was a “Yes” respondent who had smoked or used tobacco
6 within the past 12 months. At the Wave 2 interview, these same questions on tobacco use were
7 asked with regard to the period since the last interview (month/year).
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15 The smoking status variable (i.e., never, former, current) rather than DSM-IV defined
16 nicotine dependence was selected to assess tobacco use because: 1) the adequacy of the DSM-IV
17 criteria as a valid measure of nicotine dependence remains controversial (26, 27), and 2)
18 response to the single question on smoking status is easier to elicit in the clinical setting, with
19 more validity, than responses to a multi-item measure of tobacco use for which no consensus,
20 stand-alone, instrument yet exists (26, 27). To categorize long-term or recent status as never,
21 former, or current smokers, a change variable was created with the following categories
22 according to their report of smoking at Waves 1 and 2: 1) never smoker to never smoker, 2)
23 former smoker to former smoker, 3) current smoker to former smoker, 4) current smoker to
24 current smoker, 5) never smoker to current smoker, 6) former smoker to current smoker, and 7)
25 never smoker to former smoker.
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41 Other potential confounders or effect modifiers because of their known correlations with
42 smoking and/or SRO, measured at Wave 1, were: demographic characteristics (age, gender,
43 race/ethnicity, marital status, education, employment status, income, urban residence, geographic
44 region), and lifetime measures of DSM-IV Axis I and Axis II disorders. The Axis I disorders
45 were categorized into mood disorders (major depression, dysthymia, bipolar I and bipolar II),
46 anxiety disorders (panic disorder, social phobia, specific phobia, generalized anxiety), alcohol
47 use disorders (alcohol abuse or dependence), and other substance use disorders (drug abuse or
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3 dependence). A history of Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), queried only at
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5 Wave 2, was used among the Wave 1 predictors, its lifetime quality presumed since the DSM-IV
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7 criteria for ADHD include the presence of ADHD symptoms before age seven. All ten of the
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9 Axis II personality disorders measured in AUDADIS-IV (shown in Table 1), measured at Wave
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11 1, were included as well.
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15 **Assessment:** For both Waves 1 and 2, the Alcohol Use Disorder and Associated
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17 Disabilities Interview Schedule (AUDADIS-IV) was administered by interviewers from the U.S.
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19 Census Bureau. The reliability and validity of the DSM-IV diagnoses obtained through the
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21 AUDADIS-IV have been demonstrated in clinical and general samples in the U.S. and in other
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23 countries (28).
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27 **Statistical Analysis:** Weighted percentages and standard errors measured the distribution
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29 of the covariates (demographic characteristics and lifetime psychiatric variables) reported at
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31 Wave 1 for the sample with low mood and for the complementary sample of persons with no low
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33 mood. Chi-squared tests were used to assess differences between comparison groups, e.g., the at-
34
35 risk sample and the complementary sample of NESARC participants who did not report low
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37 mood. Unadjusted and adjusted odds ratios (OR and AOR) and 95% confidence intervals (CI)
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39 were calculated from univariate logistic regressions and multivariate logistic regressions,
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41 respectively, to assess prediction of Wave 2 SRO in the sample of persons reporting low mood.
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43 respectively. The incidence of SRO at Wave 2 (since the Wave 1 interview) by smoking status,
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45 prior SRO, and all other covariates at Wave 1, were also calculated. The opposite temporal
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47 relationship of prior SRO (reported in Wave 1) on future current smoking (reported in Wave 2)
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49 was tested using the identical covariates for assessing predictors of Wave 2 SRO, following
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51 Granger (29). All models were estimated with the PROC SURVEYLOGISTIC function of SAS
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3 statistical software version 9.2, with the results verified through an internal statistical review at
4
5 the U.S. Census Bureau.
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8 Missing values were replaced through imputation using assignment and allocation
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10 methods as described in the NESARC Source and Accuracy Statements (24, 25). Sensitivity
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12 analyses were performed that included: comparison of the at-risk subsample to the
13
14 complementary Wave 2 NESARC sample; using different sets of control variables with and
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16 without education, and census region; and including help-seeking behavior controls. These
17
18 analyses did not change the associations between smoking and SRO reported below.
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24 RESULTS

25 *Wave 1 Characteristics*

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27 Table 1 shows weighted percentages by smoking status, SRO taken together and
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29 individually, demographic characteristics, and psychiatric disorders (DSM-IV Axis I and Axis II)
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31 in the sample of persons reporting low mood at Wave 1 and the rest of the NESARC sample.
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33 Current smoking, SRO, and the prevalence of psychiatric disorders were markedly higher among
34
35 the low mood sample, confirming their at-risk status. Other demographic characteristics
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37 previously associated with higher risk of suicide and SROs were also higher in the low mood
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39 subsample: more females, more low and fewer high income responders, fewer married, and more
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41 separated or never married, and more unemployed individuals. Differences by race/ethnicity,
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43 age, urban or rural residence, and geographic area were also observed.
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51 *Effects of Wave 1 characteristics on Wave 2 SRO*

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3 From here on, reported statistics are for the sample of persons reporting low mood at
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5 Wave 2. The overall incidence rate of SRO (occurring between the Wave 1 and Wave 2
6
7 interviews) was 28.2% (s.e.=0.33%). Table 2 shows weighted percentages and odds ratios for
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9 Wave 2 SRO by smoking history, prior SRO, and the control variables as reported in Wave 1.
10
11 Unadjusted odds ratios (OR) and 95% CI for future SRO are shown as reference points. The
12
13 adjusted odds ratios (AOR) and 95% CI show significantly higher risk of Wave 2 SRO for both
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15 Wave 1 current smokers (AOR=1.41, 95% CI= 1.28, 1.55) and former smokers (AOR=1.32,
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17 95% CI=1.21, 1.43) relative to never smokers. The difference in point estimates of risk between
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19 current versus former smokers was not significant ($\chi^2=1.95$, $p = 0.16$).
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25 The multivariate model showed that SRO in Wave 1 is the strongest predictor of a Wave
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27 2 SRO (AOR=3.49, 95% CI= 3.18, 3.84). Significant, independent risk of future SRO was also
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29 observed for individuals who were female, Hispanic, younger, cohabiting, divorced or separated,
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31 of lower income, unemployed, and resided outside the Northeast region. Of the DSM-IV Axis I
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33 disorders, only anxiety (AOR= 1.08, 95% CI=1.01, 1.17) and ADHD (AOR=1.56, 95% CI=1.36,
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35 1.79) showed significantly elevated risk of Wave 2 SRO; mood disorder was correlated with
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37 reduced Wave 2 SRO risk (AOR=0.77; 95% CI=0.70, 0.84). Three of the DSM-IV Axis II
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39 disorders, i.e., borderline personality, schizotypal, and avoidant personality, showed significantly
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41 increased risk for Wave 2 SRO.
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46 47 48 *Smoking status change from Wave 1 to Wave 2* 49

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51 The great majority of the sample (90.5%) did not change their smoking status as never,
52
53 former, or current smoker, between Waves 1 and 2 (Table 3). Among the remaining 9.5%, over
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55 half (5.3%) had shifted from being current smokers to former smokers; more than a fourth
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3 (2.6%) were never smokers in Wave 1 who became current smokers in Wave 2; and a smaller
4
5 proportion (<2%) who were former smokers in Wave 1 relapsed to smoking in Wave 2.
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8 a) *Effects on Wave 2 SRO.* Table 3 shows adjusted odds ratios indicating significant
9
10 risk for SRO among all categories of ever-smokers relative to the persistent never smokers. The
11
12 highest risk was seen for relapsers (former smoker to current smoker) (AOR=3.42, 95%
13
14 CI=2.85, 4.11); new smokers (never smoker to current smoker) showed the next highest risk
15
16 (AOR=1.82, 95% CI=1.51, 2.19); and long-term former smokers (during both Wave 1 and 2)
17
18 showed the least elevated, yet still significant, risk (AOR=1.22, 95% CI=1.12, 1.34). The
19
20 seventh category consisting of never smokers in Wave 1 who reported former smoker status in
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22 Wave 2 was too small for a valid analysis.
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27 b) *Comparative risks by abstinence duration, relapse, and new smoking.* Pair-wise
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29 chi-squared tests for equality of coefficients permitted a comparison of risk estimates for Wave
30
31 2 SRO (shown in Table 3) between categories of smoking status change. Given the three-year
32
33 interval between Waves 1 and 2 and the coding requirement that former smoking status is
34
35 assigned only upon reporting of at least 12 months of abstinence, long-term former smokers
36
37 (Category 2, Table 3) would have been abstinent for at least four years. Persons who shifted
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39 from current smoking in Wave 1 to former smoking in Wave 2 (Category 3, Table 3) would
40
41 have been abstinent for at least 12 months and a maximum of four years.
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46 The analysis showed that the AOR for Wave 2 SRO among recent former smokers
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48 (Category 3) did not differ from persistent current smokers (Category 4) ($\chi^2(1) = 1.26, p = 0.26$).
49
50 However, long-term former smokers (Category 2) showed a significantly lower AOR for Wave 2
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52 SRO than persistent current smokers ($\chi^2(1) = 16.9, p < 0.0001$). These data suggest that a
53
54 reduction in risk for future SRO with past smoking becomes apparent after a considerable period
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3 of abstinence. Of additional interest were the risk estimates associated with re-starting (i.e.
4 relapse) and with beginning to smoke in Wave 2. Compared to persistent current smokers, the
5 AOR for Wave 2 SRO was significantly higher for both relapsers ($\chi^2(1) = 56.00$, $p < 0.0001$), and
6 smoking beginners in Wave 2 ($\chi^2(1) = 4.11$, $p = 0.04$). Further, the AOR for Wave 2 SRO was
7 significantly higher among relapsers than beginning smokers ($\chi^2(1) = 19.0$, $p < 0.0001$).
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18 *Does prior SRO predict smoking?*

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20 A multiple regression model on current smoking in Wave 2 was fit using the identical list
21 of control variables for predicting Wave 2 SRO. This second model did not show a direct effect
22 of prior SRO on Wave 2 current smoking. Persons with Wave 1 SROs were *less* likely to report
23 current smoking status at Wave 2 than were persons who did not experience SRO in Wave 1
24 (AOR=0.81, 95% CI=0.72, 0.90).
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32 To understand the temporal relationship between smoking and SRO, the effects of the
33 interaction of Wave 1 smoking status (current vs. never smoker and former vs. never smoker)
34 with history of prior SRO were examined. Table 4 shows adjusted odds ratios from separate
35 multiple regression models on SRO and on current smoking in Wave 2 for combined effects of
36 smoking status and prior SRO reported in Wave 1. Never smokers without a prior SRO at Wave
37 1 comprised the reference group in each model. These analyses did not fundamentally change the
38 finding that smoking predicts increased risk of SRO and that the reverse relationship does not
39 hold, but indicates nuanced impact of both SRO and smoking history.
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50 The model on Wave 2 SRO (Table 4 section a) shows that, other characteristics (e.g.,
51 demographics and psychopathology) being equal: a) all combinations of smoking status and SRO
52 history had statistically significant risks for Wave 2 SRO relative to never smokers without prior
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3 SRO; and b) for each smoking category, the risks were considerably greater when the combined
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5 group involved a prior SRO. The data also show that former smoking and current smoking, in
6
7 the absence of prior SRO, are valid predictors of an *initial* SRO. However, once a person has had
8
9 a SRO, smoking status history does not change the risk prediction - the risk of *recurrence* is fully
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11 predicted by that prior SRO and the other characteristics. The second model, on Wave 2 current
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13 smoking (Table 4 section b), shows an expectedly substantial likelihood of being a current
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15 smoker in Wave 2 for current smokers in Wave 1, regardless of SRO history. Of interest, prior
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17 SRO predicted a contrasting *reduction* in the likelihood of smoking uptake in Wave 2 for former
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19 smokers and never smokers.
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27 DISCUSSION

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29 The main findings from the present sample of persons reporting low mood are: 1) current
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31 and past smoking predicted increased risk for SRO independently of demographics, psychiatric
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33 factors, and prior SRO; 2) long-term smoking abstinence was associated with lower risk than
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35 persistent smoking; 3) new smoking due to relapse after a period of abstinence or to initiation of
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37 smoking by erstwhile never smokers was associated with an increased risk of SRO relative to
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39 persistent smoking; 4) prior SRO did not increase the risk of future smoking.
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43 For three Axis I disorders, i.e., mood, alcohol use, and substance use, the adjusted odds
44
45 ratios indicated either insignificant effects or a decreased risk of future SRO. These results differ
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47 from the increased risks found in the unadjusted analyses, indicating confounding effects of
48
49 correlated predictors of SRO, for example, prior SRO and comorbid psychiatric disorders (3-5).
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51 In further analysis that excluded prior SRO in the multivariate model, a positive, predictive effect
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53 of mood disorder on future SRO (AOR=2.05, 95% CI=1.92,2.17) was observed, contrary to the
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3 reduced effect of mood disorder in the full model that adjusted for prior SRO (results available
4 upon request). This finding exemplifies an instance when collinearity with a stronger predictor
5 (e.g., Wave 1 SRO) overwhelmed the explanatory power of other predictors with weaker
6 relationships. It is thus remarkable that significant effects of smoking on risk of SRO remained
7 despite the evidence of effect suppression due to confounding. Ranked in decreasing order, the
8 significant predictors of SRO risk in the present sample were: prior SRO, borderline personality
9 disorder, ADHD, schizotypal disorder, current smoking, former smoking, avoidant personality
10 disorder, and selected demographic characteristics.
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22 Other than the present one, there have been seven longitudinal epidemiological studies of
23 smoking and SRO (14-20). The positive effect of current smoking on future SRO reported here
24 was also observed in three studies (14-16). Problems of recall due to the long, ten year, interval
25 between data time points could explain the negative finding of the study by Kessler et al (17);
26 while the younger age of the samples in two studies (19-20) could have masked a future effect.
27 Of clinical and public health importance is the finding, first reported here, that longer abstinence
28 from smoking decreased the risk for SRO. The latter observation, not considered in two negative
29 studies regarding past smoking (14, 16), could account for the inconsistent findings. Notably,
30 the divergence according to longevity of abstinence is consistent with evidence for lung cancer
31 and other smoking-related disorders that risk reduction from stopping smoking occurs only after
32 multiple years of abstinence (31, 32). The worrisome observation that relapsers and new
33 smokers are at even higher risk of future SRO than persistent smokers suggests particular targets
34 for increased therapeutic attention. Finally, the data negated a reverse temporal relationship of
35 SRO on smoking, as also seen in a study of adolescents (15). Instead, a reduction in risk for
36 future smoking was observed among former and never smokers with prior SRO in Wave 1
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3 compared to their counterparts without prior SRO. Perhaps among those former and never
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5 smokers, already inclined towards the pro-health behaviour of not currently smoking, was a
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7 subset spurred by the prior SRO to undertake further health-promoting and therapeutic actions,
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9 which immunized them against future smoking. Their counterparts who did not experience a
10
11 prior SRO were less likely to be as self-protective or to seek counselling and similar treatments,
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13 and were less immunized against resorting to new smoking. The serendipitous observation from
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15 the present sample that prior SRO and treatment seeking were well-correlated ($r=0.43$, $p=0.0001$)
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17 is consistent with that conjecture.
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22 Strengths and limitations of the study are noted. An important strength is the
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24 concomitance of rigorous methods and materials not found in prior work on the smoking-suicide
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26 question – face-to-face interviews, a longitudinal design, a large sample, a validated instrument,
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28 and a comprehensive range of putative predictors that permitted statistical control of key
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30 background factors and comorbidities. A further strength is the use of a simple yet meaningful
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32 measure of smoking status (i.e., never, former or current smoking), that is easy for a questioner
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34 to administer and for the respondent to recall and understand. Even so, study limitations call for
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36 cautious interpretation of the findings. The present sample comprised the subgroup (22%) of
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38 Wave 2 participants ($N=34,653$) who self-reported low mood during the three-year interval
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40 between the interviews. This selectivity yields findings relevant to mental health settings that are
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42 likely to serve persons experiencing mood problems; however, they may not generalize to the
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44 rest of the NESARC sample or to the national population. Second, the sample did not include
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46 persons who had completed suicide attempts. Using the U.S. rate of 11.1 per 100,000 population
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48 per year (30), the Wave 1 sample of 43,093 could be expected to include about 14 persons with
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50 completed suicides before Wave 2 (95% CI= 6.8, 21.6), introducing a non-trivial, although likely
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3 small, selection bias. Third, the present study did not assess the effects of medical conditions
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5 which are possibly causally related, albeit in different directions, to smoking and to SRO. Fourth,
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7 the NESARC did not obtain information from adolescents, a subgroup with a known high risk
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9 for SRO (2). Finally, in exploratory, unadjusted, analyses, predictive effects of current smoking
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11 were observed across the individual SRO whereas past smoking predicted want to die and
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13 suicidal ideation, but not suicide attempt. Validation and articulation of these preliminary
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15 observations need to be accomplished in future work.
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20 The rigorous methodology employed in the NESARC gives eminent credence to the
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22 central findings of this analysis - an independent effect of smoking on SRO and the absence of a
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24 positive influence of prior SRO on future smoking. These results are consistent with the
25
26 hypothesis that smoking exerts a contributing, and not simply a correlational, effect on risk of
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28 SRO. By contrast, these results are inconsistent with the hypothesis that SRO causes smoking or
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30 that a third factor causes both smoking and SRO. The neurobiological, genetic, psychiatric and
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32 psychological underpinnings of these associations warrant further investigation. The knowledge
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34 gained could advance prevention and treatment options for reducing the prevalence of tobacco
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36 use and suicide.
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42
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44
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46
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48
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51 de-identified to prevent full anonymity of participants. Approval for conducting this secondary
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53 analysis of previously collected data was not required.
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6 In order to safeguard sensitive personal information, NESARC data are not available for public
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8 use. The restricted use data sets are maintained by the U.S. Census Bureau on behalf of NIAAA,
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10 and any requests to use NESARC data for replication or other purposes may be directed to the
11
12 NIAAA coordinator for NESARC, Aaron White (whitea4@mail.nih.gov).
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Table 1: Wave 1 characteristics of the low mood sample and the rest of the NESARC Wave 2 sample. Weighted percentages^a (%) and standard error (s.e)

Variable	Total Wave 2 sample %	s.e.	Low mood sample ^b %	s.e.	Rest of sample ^c %	s.e.
Sample size	34,653		7,352		27,301	
Smoking status						
Current smoker	27.02	0.17	31.65	0.38	25.85	0.19
Former smoker	19.58	0.16	17.84	0.28	20.02	0.17
Never smoker	53.40	0.19	50.51	0.42	54.13	0.20
Wave 1 Suicide related outcomes (SRO)						
Want to die	11.42	0.10	25.55	0.27	7.84	0.10
Suicidal ideation	10.17	0.10	23.35	0.26	6.82	0.10
Suicide ideation	8.42	0.09	19.27	0.27	5.66	0.09
Suicide attempt	2.35	0.04	6.09	0.17	1.40	0.04
Demographics						
Gender						
Female	52.08	0.16	64.13	0.40	49.02	0.17
Male	47.92	0.16	35.87	0.40	50.98	0.17
Race/Ethnicity						
White	70.93	0.24	71.39	0.40	70.81	0.25
Black	10.75	0.20	10.61	0.22	10.79	0.21
Hispanic	11.56	0.10	11.20	0.15	11.65	0.12
Asian/Pac. Islander	4.36	0.06	3.50	0.10	4.58	0.06
Amer. Indian/Alaska Native	2.40	0.11	3.29	0.20	2.17	0.11
Age:						
18-19	4.02	0.07	4.47	0.15	3.91	0.08
20-29	17.78	0.14	19.28	0.30	17.40	0.15
30-44	30.90	0.17	32.28	0.29	30.54	0.18
45-64	31.08	0.15	31.64	0.24	30.94	0.17
65 and over	16.22	0.10	12.32	0.25	17.21	0.12
Household Income:						
Less than \$20,000	20.35	0.17	25.07	0.32	19.15	0.19
\$20,000 to \$34,999	19.62	0.13	20.84	0.27	19.31	0.15
\$35,000 to \$59,999	26.27	0.16	24.85	0.31	26.63	0.17
\$60,000 and over	33.76	0.16	29.24	0.33	34.91	0.17
Marital status:						
Married	59.81	0.17	54.75	0.35	61.10	0.17
Cohabiting	3.25	0.06	3.60	0.11	3.16	0.07
Widowed	6.04	0.07	5.37	0.12	6.21	0.08
Divorced	8.45	0.06	10.73	0.19	7.87	0.07
Separated	1.98	0.04	2.98	0.12	1.73	0.04
Never Married	20.46	0.17	22.57	0.33	19.93	0.17

Education:						
Less than HS	14.65	0.13	16.25	0.26	14.24	0.14
High School diploma	29.03	0.18	29.35	0.35	28.95	0.20
College	56.32	0.22	54.40	0.38	56.81	0.23
Unemployed	7.16	0.09	12.31	0.25	5.85	0.09
Not unemployed	92.84	0.09	87.69	0.25	94.15	0.09
Urban	28.89	0.26	30.59	0.41	28.46	0.25
Rural/Not in Central City	71.11	0.26	69.41	0.41	71.54	0.25
Northeast	19.67	0.08	18.57	0.15	19.95	0.10
Midwest	23.15	0.16	23.52	0.32	23.05	0.21
South	35.21	0.15	34.89	0.39	35.29	0.19
West	21.97	0.11	23.02	0.23	21.71	0.15
Lifetime Psychiatric Disorders						
Axis I Disorders						
Alcohol Use	30.43	0.20	33.57	0.39	29.63	0.20
Substance Use	10.42	0.11	15.06	0.26	9.25	0.11
Nicotine Dependence	17.47	0.13	24.33	0.37	15.73	0.13
Anxiety disorder	17.88	0.17	31.00	0.34	14.55	0.17
Mood disorder	21.09	0.13	41.82	0.33	15.82	0.13
Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity	2.51	0.06	5.82	0.19	1.67	0.05
Axis II Disorders						
Borderline	5.89	0.08	18.44	0.28	2.70	0.07
Schizotypal	3.93	0.06	11.20	0.24	2.09	0.05
Narcissistic	6.18	0.08	11.88	0.23	4.74	0.08
Avoidant	2.32	0.05	6.14	0.17	1.36	0.05
Antisocial	3.63	0.07	5.86	0.21	3.07	0.07
Dependent	0.43	0.02	1.36	0.09	0.19	0.01
Obsessive-Compulsive	8.07	0.10	13.50	0.31	6.69	0.09
Paranoid	4.33	0.07	9.66	0.21	2.98	0.06
Schizoid	3.06	0.06	6.44	0.21	2.21	0.05
Histrionic	1.80	0.04	3.68	0.15	1.32	0.04

^aThe sampling weight variable in Wave 2 was used.

^bRespondents in NESARC Wave 2 who reported low mood lasting two weeks or more during the three-year interval covered in the Wave 2 NESARC and were asked the three suicidal behavior questions.

^cRespondents in NESARC Wave 2 who did not report low mood and were not asked the three suicidal questions.

Table 2: Weighted percentage of suicide related outcomes (SRO)^a reported in Wave 2 by Wave 1 characteristics, and unadjusted and adjusted odds ratios for risk of Wave 2 SRO among persons reporting low mood at the NESARC Wave 2 interview. (N=7352)^b

Variable	n/N	Weighted percentage of Wave 2 SRO	Standard error	OR ^c	95% CI	AOR ^d	95% CI
Smoking history							
Current smoker in Wave 1							
Former Smoker in Wave 1	809/2217	35.73	0.64	1.77	1.64, 1.90	1.41	1.28, 1.55
Never Smoker in Wave 1	339/1280	26.68	0.67	1.16	1.07, 1.25	1.32	1.21, 1.43
	981/3855	23.94	0.43	1.00		1.00	
SRO in Wave 1							
	1009/1940	50.01	0.76	3.84	3.60, 4.10	3.49	3.18, 3.84
Demographics							
Sex							
Female	1488/5090	28.51	0.36	1.05	0.98, 1.12	1.13	1.04, 1.22
Male	641/2262	27.54	0.59	1.00		1.00	
Race							
White	1253/4295	28.38	0.36	1.00		1.00	
Black	333/1352	26.53	0.70	0.91	0.84, 0.99	0.84	0.76, 0.92
Hispanic	438/1342	30.33	0.52	1.10	1.04, 1.17	1.26	1.16, 1.36
Asian/Pacific Islander	47/ 169	22.68	0.84	0.74	0.67, 0.82	0.93	0.82, 1.06
American Indian	58/ 194	27.18	2.81	0.94	0.71, 1.25	0.69	0.51, 0.92
Age							
Age 18-19	94/ 264	36.65	1.73	1.00		1.00	
Age 20-29	410/1287	31.40	0.67	0.83	0.69, 0.98	0.77	0.63, 0.94
Age 30-44	750/2438	29.32	0.62	0.75	0.64, 0.88	0.73	0.60, 0.90
Age 45-64	679/2395	26.82	0.63	0.66	0.56, 0.78	0.69	0.56, 0.84
Age 65 and over	196/ 968	20.90	0.93	0.47	0.39, 0.57	0.68	0.54, 0.86
Marital status							
Married	836/3309	24.87	0.49	1.00		1.00	
Cohabiting	86/ 230	35.58	1.67	1.67	1.42, 1.96	1.27	1.07, 1.51
Widowed	128/ 562	24.26	1.09	0.97	0.85, 1.10	0.92	0.78, 1.07
Divorced	390/1104	36.01	0.84	1.70	1.57, 1.84	1.20	1.10, 1.32
Separated	130/ 338	37.93	1.78	1.85	1.58, 2.15	1.29	1.06, 1.56
Never married	559/2129	30.87	0.69	1.35	1.24, 1.46	0.97	0.87, 1.09
Education							
Less than High School	440/1358	31.58	0.92	1.17	1.04, 1.32	1.09	0.95, 1.25
High School Diploma	606/2111	28.27	0.74	1.00		1.00	
Some College or more	1083/3883	27.08	0.35	0.94	0.87, 1.02	1.08	1.00, 1.17
Lifetime Psychiatric Disorder							
Axis I Disorders							
Alcohol Use	811/2350	32.74	0.60	1.40	1.31, 1.49	0.95	0.87, 1.04
Substance Use	427/1033	38.42	0.94	1.75	1.61, 1.89	0.98	0.88, 1.09

Anxiety	843/2278	37.57	0.60	1.72	1.62, 1.83	1.08	1.01, 1.17
Mood	1217/3151	36.62	0.48	2.04	1.92, 2.17	0.77	0.70, 0.84
Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder	208/ 394	51.14	1.42	2.87	2.56, 3.22	1.56	1.36, 1.79
Axis II Disorders							
Borderline	821/1433	55.75	0.79	4.49	4.22, 4.77	2.91	2.69, 3.16
Schizotypal	485/ 886	53.41	1.26	3.44	3.09, 3.84	1.50	1.31, 1.72
Narcissistic	443/ 993	42.49	1.01	2.08	1.89, 2.29	1.03	0.92, 1.14
Avoidant	245/ 446	51.87	1.37	2.97	2.66, 3.32	1.29	1.05, 1.58
Antisocial	188/ 395	41.55	1.39	1.89	1.68, 2.13	0.85	0.72, 1.01
Dependent	58/ 90	56.90	2.90	3.44	2.74, 4.30	1.04	0.76, 1.41
Ob-Com	377/ 961	36.07	1.05	1.53	1.39, 1.69	0.90	0.80, 1.00
Paranoid	364/ 756	45.74	1.16	2.37	2.14, 2.62	0.95	0.82, 1.10
Schizoid	210/ 473	43.81	1.26	2.10	1.89, 2.33	1.01	0.88, 1.16
Histrionic	129/ 266	44.42	1.83	2.10	1.82, 2.43	0.76	0.63, 0.93

^aSRO (Suicide related outcome: feel like want to die, suicide ideation, suicide attempt; 0=None, 1=any SRO).

^bMissing observations for specific variables: Race – 43, Hispanic origin – 2, age – 13, marital status- 4, educational attainment – 70, household income-2544, unemployed – 28, Wave 2 individual suicide related outcomes – 12-18 “unknown” changed to “no”. Treatment of unknown values in determination of psychiatric diagnosis variables is known only to original NESARC project staff at NIAAA.

^cOdds Ratios (OR) and 95% confidence intervals (CI) based on simple regression models estimating Wave 2 SRO as a function of an individual predictor variable.

^dAdjusted Odds Ratios (AOR) and 95% CI based on a multiple logistic regression estimating Wave 2 SRO as a function of age, sex, race/ethnicity, marital status, income, education, unemployed status, Census region, urban residence, smoking status, Axis I and Axis II disorders (as described in text), and lifetime SRO prior to Wave 1.

Table 3: Effects on Wave 2 suicide related outcomes (SRO) according to smoking status change as reported in NESARC Wave 1 and Wave 2 interviews.

Smoking status in Wave 1 to Wave 2	n/N	Weighted percentage ^b (standard error)	Wave 2 SRO ^a	
			AOR ^c	95% CI
1. Consistent never smoker (in Wave 1 and Wave 2)	897/3653	47.8 (0.40)	1.00	
2. Long-term former smoker (in Wave 1 and Wave 2)	293/1185	16.4 (0.26)	1.22	1.12, 1.34
3. Recent former smoker (current smoker in Wave 1, former smoker in Wave 2)	126/393	5.3 (0.14)	1.37	1.16, 1.63
4. Persistent current smoker (in Wave 1 and Wave 2)	683/1824	26.3 (0.35)	1.50	1.35, 1.66
5. New current smoker (never smoker in Wave 1, current smoker in Wave 2)	82/194	2.6 (0.10)	1.82	1.51, 2.19
6. Relapser (former smoker in Wave 1, current smoker in Wave 2)	46/95	1.5 (0.08)	3.42	2.85, 4.11
	N=7352 ^d			

^aAny of three items: want to die, suicidal ideation, suicide attempt

^bThe sampling weight variable in Wave 2 was used.

^cAORs are adjusted odds ratio with 95% confidence intervals (CI) based on multiple logistic regression of Wave 2 SRO as a function of age, sex, race/ethnicity, marital status, income, education, unemployed status, Census region, urban residence, smoking status, Axis I and Axis II disorders (as described in text), and lifetime SRO reported in Wave 1.

^dThe seventh group (n=8), which consisted of persons who were never smokers in Wave 1, began to smoke and then stopped smoking in Wave 2, was too small for a valid assessment of risk.

Table 4: Combined effects of smoking status and prior SRO^a reported in Wave 1
on a) Wave 2 SRO and b) Wave 2 current smoking

Wave 1 Smoking status and Wave 1 SRO	n/N	Weighted percentages (standard error)	AOR ^b	95% CI
a) Effect on Wave 2 SRO				
Never smoker - No prior SRO (referent)	550 / 2978	17.5 (0.4)	1.00	N.A. ^c
Never smoker - Prior SRO	431 / 877	46.8 (1.0)	4.12	3.65, 4.64
Former smoker - No prior SRO	187 / 968	20.6 (0.8)	1.42	1.28, 1.57
Former smoker - Prior SRO	152 / 312	48.2 (1.6)	4.58	3.60, 5.82
Current smoker - No prior SRO	383 / 1466	26.6 (0.7)	1.56	1.41, 1.74
Current smoker - Prior SRO	426 / 751	54.1 (1.2)	4.77	3.70, 5.87
b) Effect on Wave 2 Current smoking				
Never smoker – No prior SRO (referent)	166 / 2978	5.3 (0.2)	1.00	N.A. ^c
Never smoker – Prior SRO	28 / 877	4.3 (0.4)	0.70	0.60, 0.82
Former smoker – No prior SRO	71 / 968	8.6 (0.5)	2.20	1.77, 2.31
Former smoker – Prior SRO	24 / 312	6.9 (0.6)	1.15	0.83, 1.61
Current smoker – No prior SRO	1204 / 1466	82.7 (0.5)	82.9	73.7, 93.2
Current smoker – Prior SRO	620 / 751	84.2 (0.8)	77.0	57.6, 104.8

^aAny of three items: want to die, suicidal ideation, suicide attempt

^bAORs are adjusted odds ratios with 95% confidence intervals (CI) based on multiple logistic regression models controlling for demographics and psychiatric history at Wave 1 (shown in Table 1).

^cNot applicable

STROBE Statement—Checklist of items that should be included in reports of *cohort studies*

	Item No	Recommendation
Title and abstract	1	(a) Indicate the study's design with a commonly used term in the title or the abstract (b) Provide in the abstract an informative and balanced summary of what was done and what was found
Introduction		
Background/rationale	2	Explain the scientific background and rationale for the investigation being reported
Objectives	3	State specific objectives, including any prespecified hypotheses
Methods		
Study design	4	Present key elements of study design early in the paper
Setting	5	Describe the setting, locations, and relevant dates, including periods of recruitment, exposure, follow-up, and data collection
Participants	6	(a) Give the eligibility criteria, and the sources and methods of selection of participants. Describe methods of follow-up (b) For matched studies, give matching criteria and number of exposed and unexposed
Variables	7	Clearly define all outcomes, exposures, predictors, potential confounders, and effect modifiers. Give diagnostic criteria, if applicable
Data sources/ measurement	8*	For each variable of interest, give sources of data and details of methods of assessment (measurement). Describe comparability of assessment methods if there is more than one group
Bias	9	Describe any efforts to address potential sources of bias
Study size	10	Explain how the study size was arrived at
Quantitative variables	11	Explain how quantitative variables were handled in the analyses. If applicable, describe which groupings were chosen and why
Statistical methods	12	(a) Describe all statistical methods, including those used to control for confounding (b) Describe any methods used to examine subgroups and interactions (c) Explain how missing data were addressed (d) If applicable, explain how loss to follow-up was addressed (e) Describe any sensitivity analyses
Results		
Participants	13*	(a) Report numbers of individuals at each stage of study—eg numbers potentially eligible, examined for eligibility, confirmed eligible, included in the study, completing follow-up, and analysed (b) Give reasons for non-participation at each stage (c) Consider use of a flow diagram
Descriptive data	14*	(a) Give characteristics of study participants (eg demographic, clinical, social) and information on exposures and potential confounders (b) Indicate number of participants with missing data for each variable of interest (c) Summarise follow-up time (eg, average and total amount)
Outcome data	15*	Report numbers of outcome events or summary measures over time
Main results	16	(a) Give unadjusted estimates and, if applicable, confounder-adjusted estimates and their precision (eg, 95% confidence interval). Make clear which confounders were adjusted for and why they were included (b) Report category boundaries when continuous variables were categorized (c) If relevant, consider translating estimates of relative risk into absolute risk for a meaningful time period

1	Other analyses	17	Report other analyses done—eg analyses of subgroups and interactions, and
2			sensitivity analyses
3	Discussion		
4	Key results	18	Summarise key results with reference to study objectives
5	Limitations	19	Discuss limitations of the study, taking into account sources of potential bias or
6			imprecision. Discuss both direction and magnitude of any potential bias
7	Interpretation	20	Give a cautious overall interpretation of results considering objectives, limitations,
8			multiplicity of analyses, results from similar studies, and other relevant evidence
9	Generalisability	21	Discuss the generalisability (external validity) of the study results
10	Other information		
11	Funding	22	Give the source of funding and the role of the funders for the present study and, if
12			applicable, for the original study on which the present article is based
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17 *Give information separately for exposed and unexposed groups.

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20 **Note:** An Explanation and Elaboration article discusses each checklist item and gives methodological background and
21 published examples of transparent reporting. The STROBE checklist is best used in conjunction with this article (freely
22 available on the Web sites of PLoS Medicine at <http://www.plosmedicine.org/>, Annals of Internal Medicine at
23 <http://www.annals.org/>, and Epidemiology at <http://www.epidem.com/>). Information on the STROBE Initiative is
24 available at <http://www.strobe-statement.org>.
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**Smoking and suicidal behaviors in a sample of US adults
with low mood:
a retrospective analysis of longitudinal data**

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6 **Smoking and suicidal behaviors in a sample of US adults with low mood:**
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9 **a retrospective analysis of longitudinal data**
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11 **Lirio S. Covey^a, Ivan Berlin^b, Mei-Chen Hu^c, Jahn K. Hakes^d**
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ABSTRACT

Objective: To investigate whether: 1) smoking predicts suicide related outcomes (SRO); 2) prior SRO predicts smoking, 3) smoking abstinence affects the risk of SRO, 4) psychiatric comorbidity modifies the relationship between smoking and SRO.

Design: Retrospective analysis of longitudinal data obtained in Wave 1 (2001-2002) and Wave 2 (2004-2005) of the National Epidemiologic Survey of Alcohol and Related Conditions.

Setting: Face-to-face interviews conducted with persons in the community.

Participants: US adults (N=43,093) aged 18 years or older were interviewed in Wave 1 and re-interviewed (N=34,653) three years later. For the present study, the sample was the subset of persons (N=7,352) who at the Wave 2 interview reported low mood lasting two weeks or more during the past three years and were further queried regarding SRO occurring between Waves 1 and 2.

Outcome measures: SRO composed of any of: 1) want to die, 2) suicidal ideation, 3) suicide attempt, reported at Wave 2. Current smoking reported at Wave 2.

Results: Current and former smoking in Wave 1 predicted increased risk for Wave 2 SRO independently of prior SRO, psychiatric history, and socio-demographic characteristics measured in Wave 1 (Adjusted Odds Ratio (AOR) =1.41, 95% CI=1.28 to 1.55 for current smoking; AOR=1.32, 95% CI=1.21 to 1.43 for former smoking). Prior SRO did not predict current smoking in Wave 2. Compared with persistent never smokers, risk for future SRO was highest among relapsers (AOR=3.42, 95% CI=2.85 to 4.11); next highest among smoking beginners at Wave 2 (AOR=1.82, 95% CI=1.51 to 2.19); and lowest among long-term (four+ years) former smokers (AOR=1.22, 95% CI=1.12 to 1.34). Compared with persistent current

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3 smokers, risk for SRO was lower among long-term ($p<0.0001$), but not shorter-term ($p=0.26$)
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5 abstainers.
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8 **Conclusion:** Smoking increased the risk of future SRO independently of psychiatric
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10 comorbidity. Abstinence of several years duration reduced that risk.
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12 **Word count= 298**
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For peer review only

Article Summary

Article focus

To investigate among persons reporting low mood lasting two weeks or more during the past three years whether:

- smoking predicts suicide related outcomes (want to die, suicidal ideation, suicide attempt); prior suicide related outcomes predict smoking,
- smoking abstinence affects the risk of suicide related outcomes,
- psychiatric comorbidity modifies the relationship between smoking and suicide related outcomes.

Key messages

- Current and former smoking (less than 4 years' reported abstinence) predicted increased risk for suicide related outcomes independently of prior suicide related outcomes, psychiatric history, and socio-demographic characteristics.
- Prior suicide related outcomes did not predict future current smoking.
- Compared with persistent current smokers, risk of suicide related outcomes was reduced with long-term (≥ 4 years) but not with shorter-term (< 4 years) abstinence.

Strengths and limitations

Strengths

- Face-to-face interviews, a longitudinal design, a large representative sample, a validated diagnostic instrument, a comprehensive range of putative predictors that permitted statistical control of the key background factors and comorbidities.

Limitations

- Only persons with self-reported low mood were questioned about suicide related outcomes; consequently, no generalizability to other populations.
- The sample did not include persons who had completed suicide.
- No assessment of the effects of medical conditions which are possibly causally related to smoking and to suicide related outcomes.
- Smoking information was self-reported, not biologically verified.
- No information from adolescents, a high risk population for both smoking and suicide related outcomes.

INTRODUCTION

Suicide is a leading cause of death worldwide. Close to one million persons die from suicide each year. The World Health Organization predicts that by 2020 suicide deaths will rise to 1.5 million (1). Completed suicides are largely predicted by the wish to die, thoughts of suicide, and unsuccessful previous suicidal attempts (2), making it important to understand the risks posed by suicide related outcomes (SRO). A history of mental disorders (3-5) and particular demographic characteristics (female gender, younger age, unmarried status, and unemployment) are putative risk factors for suicide and SRO (2). Smoking, long known as a major risk factor for numerous medical illnesses (6), and recently, for psychiatric outcomes as well (7, 8) has received increasing attention for its potential contribution to the risk of completed suicides and SRO (9). Nevertheless, whether the association between smoking and suicidal behaviours is causal or correlational remains unclear.

A link between smoking and suicide was observed as early as 1976 by Doll and Peto in their study of mortality due to smoking in male British doctors (10). Clinical and epidemiological studies that subsequently investigated the issue are in general, but not universal, agreement in finding a significant association between smoking and suicide and suicidal behaviors. Among studies that focused on SRO, three that used cross-sectional epidemiological data found a positive correlational association between smoking and SRO (11-13). Of seven longitudinal studies that also utilized community-based data, three (14-16) found that current smoking predicted suicidal behaviors even after controlling for the effects of demographic and psychiatric variables; four studies did not find a positive relationship (17-20).

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3 The effect of smoking abstinence on risk of SRO is also unclear. A study of young adults
4 followed for 10 years found that recent, but not pre-survey, cigarette smoking predicted suicidal
5 thoughts and attempts (14). Another study showed higher incidence rates of suicidal ideation
6 among former smokers than never smokers, but the difference was no longer significant after
7 adjustment with depressive disorder, anxiety symptoms, and alcohol dependence (16). A study
8 based on Wave 1 data from the National Epidemiological Survey of Alcohol and Related
9 Conditions (NESARC) initially found that longer duration of abstinence decreased risk for SRO,
10 but this effect disappeared upon controlling for psychiatric comorbidity (21).
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22 A further question of theoretical and practical importance is whether prior SRO increases
23 the risk of future smoking. In the single study that has addressed this question, longitudinal data
24 obtained from adolescents showed that smoking predicted suicidal ideation and suicide attempts
25 but prior suicidality was not associated with subsequent smoking (15).
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32 The present study was conducted to address these conundrums of the smoking-suicide
33 relationship: 1) whether prior smoking predicts SRO; 2) whether prior SRO predicts smoking; 3)
34 whether smoking cessation and its corollary, duration of smoking abstinence, affects risk for
35 SRO, and 4) whether these relationships are independent of comorbid psychiatric illness. Also
36 explored were the effects of smoking status changes between the two waves of the NESARC on
37 risk of future SRO. The two-wave format, the large sample, and extensive data on psychiatric
38 comorbidity that characterized the NESARC (22) permitted assessment of these questions.
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48 The survey instrument had asked questions regarding the past occurrence of SRO – want
49 to die, suicidal ideation, and suicide attempt, only of persons reporting low mood. This
50 restriction limits the generalizability of findings to the general population, but the much higher
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3 occurrence of suicidal behaviours among persons with low mood (3, 4) provided a more
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5 sensitive context for detecting the risk potential of smoking for suicidal behaviours (23).
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10 METHODS

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12 Sample: The NESARC data were collected to obtain a representative national sample of
13 US adults. In Wave 1 (2001-2002), face-to-face interviews were completed with 43,093 persons
14 aged 18 years or older. The overall response rate was 81.0%. The Wave 1 sample was re-
15 interviewed in Wave 2 (2004-2005) three years later (mean interval=36.6 months, s.e.=2.62)
16 with a response rate of 80.4% (N=34,653) based on the Wave 1 sample. The NESARC sample
17 size was chosen to be sufficiently large to produce nationally representative proportions for the
18 study of substance abuse and dependence and mental disorders by demographic group with
19 confidence intervals equal to or smaller than extant studies. Following NESARC guidelines (24,
20 25), the original NESARC data set was transformed to account for survey design effects and
21 sampling weights upon responses in order to adjust for sample selection procedures, non-
22 response from selected households or individuals, oversampling (of young adults, Blacks, and
23 Hispanics), and non-response at the Wave 2 time point. Those weights and survey design effects,
24 employed in other studies based on NESARC data, as well as other methodological details of
25 Waves 1 and 2 are described in published NESARC Source and Accuracy Statements (24, 25).
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45 Data for the present study were obtained from a subset of persons (N=7,352) who
46 reported low mood at the Wave 2 interview, irrespective of low mood in Wave 1. This
47 subsample was selected for the present analysis because it produced the largest number of
48 persons from whom evaluable information for predicting Wave 2 SRO was available. The latter
49 subsample is also referred to herein as the “at-risk sample”. Persons who did not report low
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3 mood were skipped out of the SRO sections in Waves 1 and 2. The questions for low mood at the
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5 Wave 2 interview were: “Since your LAST interview in (month/year), have you ever had a time
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7 when you felt sad, blue, depressed, or down most of the time for at least 2 weeks?” and “Since
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9 your LAST interview, have you ever had a time, lasting at least 2 weeks, when you didn’t care
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11 about the things that you usually cared about, or when you didn’t enjoy the things you usually
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13 enjoyed?” At the Wave 1 interview, respondents were asked these same questions referenced to
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15 their *entire lifetime*.
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20 Variables: The outcome variables for this study were Wave 2 SRO and Wave 2 current
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22 smoking. The main covariates were prior SRO and smoking status at Wave 1. The individual
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24 SRO questions are: “During that time when (your mood was at its [sic] lowest/you enjoyed or
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26 cared the least about things), did you ... feel like you wanted to die? think about committing
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28 suicide? attempt suicide?” Responses to these items were summed to create the total SRO
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30 question and measured as a dichotomous variable (none of the three=0; any of the three=1).
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32 Respondents who did not report low mood in Wave 1 and were not asked the SRO questions
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34 were assigned a value of 0 for prior SRO.
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39 The questions on tobacco use at Wave 1 are: “In your ENTIRE LIFE, have you ever . . .
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41 (a) Smoked at least 100 cigarettes? (b) Smoked at least 50 cigars? (c) Smoked a pipe at least 50
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43 times? (d) Used snuff, such as Skoal, Skoal Bandit [sic] or Copenhagen at least 20 times? (e)
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45 Used chewing tobacco, such as Redman, Levi Garrett or Beechnut at least 20 times?” Persons
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47 who smoked cigarettes, cigars and/or pipes, comprised (a weighted) 95.9% (3368/3497) of all
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49 tobacco users. Following the coding rule of the NESARC, all tobacco users, including the 129
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51 persons who reported using snuff or chewing tobacco only, were labelled as “smokers”. A *never*
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53 *smoker* had responded “No” to each of the questions regarding lifetime use of at least 100
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3 cigarettes, at least 50 cigars, smoked a pipe at least 50 times, used snuff at least 20 times, and
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5 used chewing tobacco at least 20 times. A *former smoker* was a “Yes” responder to at least one
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7 of the prior questions who also reported that he or she had not smoked or used tobacco in the
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9 past 12 months. (N.B. Very few, if any, of this latter group would have been experiencing
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11 withdrawal; thus, the current study is not an adequate test of post-cessation withdrawal as a
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13 predictor of SRO). A *current smoker* was a “Yes” respondent who had smoked or used tobacco
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15 within the past 12 months. At the Wave 2 interview, these same questions on tobacco use were
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17 asked with regard to the period since the last interview (month/year).
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22 The smoking status variable (i.e., never, former, current) rather than DSM-IV defined
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24 nicotine dependence was selected to assess tobacco use because: 1) the adequacy of the DSM-IV
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26 criteria as a valid measure of nicotine dependence remains controversial (26, 27), and 2)
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28 response to the single question on smoking status is easier to elicit in the clinical setting, with
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30 more validity, than responses to a multi-item measure of tobacco use for which no consensus,
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32 stand-alone, instrument yet exists (26, 27). To categorize long-term or recent status as never,
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34 former, or current smokers, a change variable was created with the following categories
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36 according to their report of smoking at Waves 1 and 2: 1) never smoker to never smoker, 2)
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38 former smoker to former smoker, 3) current smoker to former smoker, 4) current smoker to
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40 current smoker, 5) never smoker to current smoker, 6) former smoker to current smoker, and 7)
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42 never smoker to former smoker.
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48 Other potential confounders or effect modifiers because of their known correlations with
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50 smoking and/or SRO, measured at Wave 1, were: demographic characteristics (age, gender,
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52 race/ethnicity, marital status, education, employment status, income, urban residence, geographic
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54 region), and lifetime measures of DSM-IV Axis I and Axis II disorders. The Axis I disorders
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3 were categorized into mood disorders (major depression, dysthymia, bipolar I and bipolar II),
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5 anxiety disorders (panic disorder, social phobia, specific phobia, generalized anxiety), alcohol
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7 use disorders (alcohol abuse or dependence), and other substance use disorders (drug abuse or
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9 dependence). A history of Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), queried only at
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11 Wave 2, was used among the Wave 1 predictors, its lifetime quality presumed since the DSM-IV
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13 criteria for ADHD include the presence of ADHD symptoms before age seven. All ten of the
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15 Axis II personality disorders measured in AUDADIS-IV (shown in Table 1), measured at Wave
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17 1, were included as well.

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22 Assessment: For both Waves 1 and 2, the Alcohol Use Disorder and Associated
23
24 Disabilities Interview Schedule (AUDADIS-IV) was administered by interviewers from the U.S.
25
26 Census Bureau. The reliability and validity of the DSM-IV diagnoses obtained through the
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28 AUDADIS-IV have been demonstrated in clinical and general samples in the U.S. and in other
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30 countries (28).

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35 Statistical Analysis: Weighted percentages and standard errors measured the distribution
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37 of the covariates (demographic characteristics and lifetime psychiatric variables) reported at
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39 Wave 1 for the sample with low mood and for the complementary sample of persons with no low
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41 mood. Chi-squared tests were used to assess differences between comparison groups, e.g., the at-
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43 risk sample and the complementary sample of NESARC participants who did not report low
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45 mood. Unadjusted and adjusted odds ratios (OR and AOR) and 95% confidence intervals (CI)
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47 were calculated from univariate logistic regressions and multivariate logistic regressions,
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49 respectively, to assess prediction of Wave 2 SRO in the sample of persons reporting low mood.
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51 respectively. The incidence of SRO at Wave 2 (since the Wave 1 interview) by smoking status,
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53 prior SRO, and all other covariates at Wave 1, were also calculated. The opposite temporal
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3 relationship of prior SRO (reported in Wave 1) on future current smoking (reported in Wave 2)
4 was tested using the identical covariates for assessing predictors of Wave 2 SRO, following
5 Granger (29). All models were estimated with the PROC SURVEYLOGISTIC function of SAS
6 statistical software version 9.2, with the results verified through an internal statistical review at
7 the U.S. Census Bureau.
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15 Missing values were replaced through imputation using assignment and allocation
16 methods as described in the NESARC Source and Accuracy Statements (24, 25). Sensitivity
17 analyses were performed that included: comparison of the at-risk subsample to the
18 complementary Wave 2 NESARC sample; using different sets of control variables with and
19 without education, and census region; and including help-seeking behavior controls. In response
20 to reviewer concerns, we performed the multiple logistic regression models for assessing
21 prediction of Wave 2 SRO and of Wave 2 current smoking based on the unweighted data
22 adjusted for design effects. These various sensitivity analyses did not alter the associations
23 between smoking and SRO reported below.
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39 RESULTS

40 *Wave 1 Characteristics*

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43 Table 1 shows weighted percentages by smoking status, SRO taken together and
44 individually, demographic characteristics, and psychiatric disorders (DSM-IV Axis I and Axis II)
45 in the sample of persons reporting low mood at Wave 1 and the rest of the NESARC sample.
46 Current smoking, SRO, and the prevalence of psychiatric disorders were markedly higher among
47 the low mood sample, confirming their at-risk status. Other demographic characteristics
48 previously associated with higher risk of suicide and SROs were also higher in the low mood
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3 subsample: more females, more low and fewer high income responders, fewer married, and more
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5 separated or never married, and more unemployed individuals. Differences by race/ethnicity,
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7 age, urban or rural residence, and geographic area were also observed.
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10 11 12 *Effects of Wave 1 characteristics on Wave 2 SRO*

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15 From here on, reported statistics are for the sample of persons reporting low mood at
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17 Wave 2. The overall incidence rate of SRO (occurring between the Wave 1 and Wave 2
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19 interviews) was 28.2% (s.e.=0.33%). Table 2 shows weighted percentages and odds ratios for
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21 Wave 2 SRO by smoking history, prior SRO, and the control variables as reported in Wave 1.
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23 Unadjusted odds ratios (OR) and 95% CI for future SRO are shown as reference points. The
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25 adjusted odds ratios (AOR) and 95% CI show significantly higher risk of Wave 2 SRO for both
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27 Wave 1 current smokers (AOR=1.41, 95% CI= 1.28, 1.55) and former smokers (AOR=1.32,
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29 95% CI=1.21, 1.43) relative to never smokers. The difference in point estimates of risk between
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31 current versus former smokers was not significant ($\chi^2=1.95$, $p = 0.16$).
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37 The multivariate model showed that SRO in Wave 1 is the strongest predictor of a Wave
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39 2 SRO (AOR=3.49, 95% CI= 3.18, 3.84). Significant, independent risk of future SRO was also
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41 observed for individuals who were female, Hispanic, younger, cohabiting, divorced or separated,
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43 of lower income, unemployed, and resided outside the Northeast region. Of the DSM-IV Axis I
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45 disorders, only anxiety (AOR= 1.08, 95% CI=1.01, 1.17) and ADHD (AOR=1.56, 95% CI=1.36,
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47 1.79) showed significantly elevated risk of Wave 2 SRO; mood disorder was correlated with
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49 reduced Wave 2 SRO risk (AOR=0.77; 95% CI=0.70, 0.84). Three of the DSM-IV Axis II
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51 disorders, i.e., borderline personality, schizotypal, and avoidant personality, showed significantly
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53 increased risk for Wave 2 SRO.
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6 *Smoking status change from Wave 1 to Wave 2*
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8 The great majority of the sample (90.5%) did not change their smoking status as never,
9 former, or current smoker, between Waves 1 and 2 (Table 3). Among the remaining 9.5%, over
10 half (5.3%) had shifted from being current smokers to former smokers; more than a fourth
11 (2.6%) were never smokers in Wave 1 who became current smokers in Wave 2; and a smaller
12 proportion (<2%) who were former smokers in Wave 1 relapsed to smoking in Wave 2.
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19 a) *Effects on Wave 2 SRO.* Table 3 shows adjusted odds ratios indicating significant
20 risk for SRO among all categories of ever-smokers relative to the persistent never smokers. The
21 highest risk was seen for relapsers (former smoker to current smoker) (AOR=3.42, 95%
22 CI=2.85, 4.11); new smokers (never smoker to current smoker) showed the next highest risk
23 (AOR=1.82, 95% CI=1.51, 2.19); and long-term former smokers (during both Wave 1 and 2)
24 showed the least elevated, yet still significant, risk (AOR=1.22, 95% CI=1.12, 1.34). The
25 seventh category consisting of never smokers in Wave 1 who reported former smoker status in
26 Wave 2 was too small for a valid analysis.
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38 b) *Comparative risks by abstinence duration, relapse, and new smoking.* Pair-wise
39 chi-squared tests for equality of coefficients permitted a comparison of risk estimates for Wave
40 2 SRO (shown in Table 3) between categories of smoking status change. Given the three-year
41 interval between Waves 1 and 2 and the coding requirement that former smoking status is
42 assigned only upon reporting of at least 12 months of abstinence, long-term former smokers
43 (Category 2, Table 3) would have been abstinent for at least four years. Persons who shifted
44 from current smoking in Wave 1 to former smoking in Wave 2 (Category 3, Table 3) would
45 have been abstinent for at least 12 months and a maximum of four years.
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3 The analysis showed that the AOR for Wave 2 SRO among recent former smokers
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5 (Category 3) did not differ from persistent current smokers (Category 4) ($\chi^2(1) = 1.26, p = 0.26$).
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7 However, long-term former smokers (Category 2) showed a significantly lower AOR for Wave 2
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9 SRO than persistent current smokers ($\chi^2(1) = 16.9, p < 0.0001$). These data suggest that a
10
11 reduction in risk for future SRO with past smoking becomes apparent after a considerable period
12
13 of abstinence. Of additional interest were the risk estimates associated with re-starting (i.e.
14
15 relapse) and with beginning to smoke in Wave 2. Compared to persistent current smokers, the
16
17 AOR for Wave 2 SRO was significantly higher for both relapsers ($\chi^2(1) = 56.00, p < 0.0001$), and
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19 smoking beginners in Wave 2 ($\chi^2(1) = 4.11, p = 0.04$). Further, the AOR for Wave 2 SRO was
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21 significantly higher among relapsers than beginning smokers ($\chi^2(1) = 19.0, p < 0.0001$).
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29 *Does prior SRO predict smoking?*

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31 A multiple regression model on current smoking in Wave 2 was fit using the identical list
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33 of control variables for predicting Wave 2 SRO. This second model did not show a direct effect
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35 of prior SRO on Wave 2 current smoking. Persons with Wave 1 SROs were *less* likely to report
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37 current smoking status at Wave 2 than were persons who did not experience SRO in Wave 1
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39 (AOR=0.81, 95% CI=0.72, 0.90).
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43 To understand the temporal relationship between smoking and SRO, the effects of the
44
45 interaction of Wave 1 smoking status (current vs. never smoker and former vs. never smoker)
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47 with history of prior SRO were examined. Table 4 shows adjusted odds ratios from separate
48
49 multiple regression models on SRO and on current smoking in Wave 2 for combined effects of
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51 smoking status and prior SRO reported in Wave 1. Never smokers without a prior SRO at Wave
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53 1 comprised the reference group in each model. These analyses did not fundamentally change the
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3 finding that smoking predicts increased risk of SRO and that the reverse relationship does not
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5 hold, but indicates nuanced impact of both SRO and smoking history.
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8 The model on Wave 2 SRO (Table 4 section a) shows that, other characteristics (e.g.,
9 demographics and psychopathology) being equal: a) all combinations of smoking status and SRO
10 history had statistically significant risks for Wave 2 SRO relative to never smokers without prior
11 SRO; and b) for each smoking category, the risks were considerably greater when the combined
12 group involved a prior SRO. The data also show that former smoking and current smoking, in
13 the absence of prior SRO, are valid predictors of an *initial* SRO. However, once a person has had
14 a SRO, smoking status history does not change the risk prediction - the risk of *recurrence* is fully
15 predicted by that prior SRO and the other characteristics. The second model, on Wave 2 current
16 smoking (Table 4 section b), shows an expectedly substantial likelihood of being a current
17 smoker in Wave 2 for current smokers in Wave 1, regardless of SRO history. Of interest, prior
18 SRO predicted a contrasting *reduction* in the likelihood of smoking uptake in Wave 2 for former
19 smokers and never smokers.
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38 DISCUSSION

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40 The main findings from the present sample of persons reporting low mood are: 1) current
41 and past smoking predicted increased risk for SRO independently of demographics, psychiatric
42 factors, and prior SRO; 2) long-term smoking abstinence was associated with lower risk than
43 persistent smoking; 3) new smoking due to relapse after a period of abstinence or to initiation of
44 smoking by erstwhile never smokers was associated with an increased risk of SRO relative to
45 persistent smoking; 4) prior SRO did not increase the risk of future smoking.
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3 For three Axis I disorders, i.e., mood, alcohol use, and substance use, the adjusted odds
4 ratios indicated either insignificant effects or a decreased risk of future SRO. These results differ
5 from the increased risks found in the unadjusted analyses, indicating confounding effects of
6 correlated predictors of SRO, for example, prior SRO and comorbid psychiatric disorders (3-5).
7
8 In further analysis that excluded prior SRO in the multivariate model, a positive, predictive effect
9 of mood disorder on future SRO (AOR=2.05, 95% CI=1.92,2.17) was observed, contrary to the
10 reduced effect of mood disorder in the full model that adjusted for prior SRO (results available
11 upon request). This finding exemplifies an instance when collinearity with a stronger predictor
12 (e.g., Wave 1 SRO) overwhelmed the explanatory power of other predictors with weaker
13 relationships. It is thus remarkable that significant effects of smoking on risk of SRO remained
14 despite the evidence of effect suppression due to confounding. Ranked in decreasing order, the
15 significant predictors of SRO risk in the present sample were: prior SRO, borderline personality
16 disorder, ADHD, schizotypal disorder, current smoking, former smoking, avoidant personality
17 disorder, and selected demographic characteristics.
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22 Other than the present one, there have been seven longitudinal epidemiological studies of
23 smoking and SRO (14-20). The positive effect of current smoking on future SRO reported here
24 was also observed in three studies (14-16). Problems of recall due to the long, ten year, interval
25 between data time points could explain the negative finding of the study by Kessler et al (17);
26 while the younger age of the samples in two studies (19-20) could have masked a future effect.
27
28 Of clinical and public health importance is the finding, first reported here, that longer abstinence
29 from smoking decreased the risk for SRO. The latter observation, not considered in two negative
30 studies regarding past smoking (14, 16), could account for the inconsistent findings. Notably,
31 the divergence according to longevity of abstinence is consistent with evidence for lung cancer
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3 and other smoking-related disorders that risk reduction from stopping smoking occurs only after
4 multiple years of abstinence (30, 31). The worrisome observation that relapsers and new
5 smokers are at even higher risk of future SRO than persistent smokers suggests particular targets
6 for increased therapeutic attention. Finally, the data negated a reverse temporal relationship of
7 SRO on smoking, as also seen in a study of adolescents (15). Instead, a reduction in risk for
8 future smoking was observed among former and never smokers with prior SRO in Wave 1
9 compared to their counterparts without prior SRO. Perhaps among those former and never
10 smokers, already inclined towards the pro-health behaviour of not currently smoking, was a
11 subset spurred by the prior SRO to undertake further health-promoting and therapeutic actions,
12 which immunized them against future smoking. Their counterparts who did not experience a
13 prior SRO were less likely to be as self-protective or to seek counselling and similar treatments,
14 and were less immunized against resorting to new smoking. The serendipitous observation from
15 the present sample that prior SRO and treatment seeking were well-correlated ($r=0.43$, $p=0.0001$)
16 is consistent with that conjecture.
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36 Strengths and limitations of the study are noted. An important strength is the
37 concomitance of rigorous methods and materials not found in prior work on the smoking-suicide
38 question – face-to-face interviews, a longitudinal design, a large sample, a validated instrument,
39 and a comprehensive range of putative predictors that permitted statistical control of key
40 background factors and comorbidities. A further strength is the use of a simple yet meaningful
41 measure of smoking status (i.e., never, former or current smoking), that is easy for a questioner
42 to administer and for the respondent to recall and understand. Even so, study limitations call for
43 cautious interpretation of the findings. The present sample comprised the subgroup (22%) of
44 Wave 2 participants (N=34,653) who self-reported low mood during the three-year interval
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3 between the interviews. This selectivity yields findings relevant to mental health settings that are
4 likely to serve persons experiencing mood problems; however, they may not generalize to the
5 rest of the NESARC sample or to the national population. Second, the sample did not include
6 persons who had completed suicide attempts. Using the U.S. rate of 11.1 per 100,000 population
7 per year (32), the Wave 1 sample of 43,093 could be expected to include about 14 persons with
8 completed suicides before Wave 2 (95% CI= 6.8, 21.6), introducing a non-trivial, although likely
9 small, selection bias. Third, the present study did not assess the effects of medical conditions
10 which are possibly causally related, albeit in different directions, to smoking and to SRO. Fourth,
11 self-reported smoking information was not biologically validated. Fifth, the NESARC did not
12 obtain information from adolescents, a subgroup with a known high risk for SRO (2). Finally, in
13 exploratory, unadjusted, analyses, predictive effects of current smoking were observed across the
14 individual SRO whereas past smoking predicted want to die and suicidal ideation, but not suicide
15 attempt. Validation and articulation of these preliminary observations need to be accomplished in
16 future work.

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37 The rigorous methodology employed in the NESARC gives eminent credence to the
38 central findings of this analysis - an independent effect of smoking on SRO and the absence of a
39 positive influence of prior SRO on future smoking. These results are consistent with the
40 hypothesis that smoking exerts a contributing, and not simply a correlational, effect on risk of
41 SRO. By contrast, these results are inconsistent with the hypothesis that SRO causes smoking or
42 that a third factor causes both smoking and SRO. The neurobiological, genetic, psychiatric and
43 psychological underpinnings of these associations warrant further investigation. The knowledge
44 gained could advance prevention and treatment options for reducing the prevalence of tobacco
45 use and suicide.

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5 All authors have completed the Unified Competing Interest form
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9
10 Census Bureau for the submitted work; 2) LC, IB, and MH received no specific support for this
11
12 work; 3) IB received occasional honoraria for participating in advisory panels of Pfizer Ltd
13
14 during the last 3 years; 4) in February 2011, LC provided educational consultation to a law firm
15
16 regarding mood effects of smoking cessation; 4) JH and MH had no relationships with any
17
18 company that might have an interest in the submitted work in the previous 3 years; 5) none of the
19
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21
22 none of the authors had a non-financial interest that may be relevant to the submitted work.
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28 Lirio Covey and Ivan Berlin conceptualized this study and, with Mei-Chen Hu, designed the
29
30 analysis. Jahn Hakes had full access to all of the data in the study and takes responsibility for the
31
32 integrity of the data and the accuracy of the data analysis. Lirio Covey was the lead writer of the
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34 manuscript. All authors participated in the interpretation of findings and writing of the
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36 manuscript. All authors had full access to the statistical reports, tables, and the manuscript; and
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38 take responsibility for the integrity of the data and the accuracy of the data analysis. The U.S.
39
40 Census Bureau, NIAAA, and other employers of the authors had no role in the study design,
41
42 implementation of the study, analysis and interpretation of data, in the writing of the report, and
43
44 the decision to submit the article for publication.
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3 The study is a secondary analysis of data collected by the National Institute of Health-National
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6 Institute of Alcohol and Alcohol Abuse of the US government. Before data collection, each
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8 respondent was informed of the nature of the survey and its potential uses, ensured of
9
10 confidentiality, and told that participation was voluntary. All participants signed a consent form
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12 prior to participating in the interviews. The US Census Bureau and the US Office of
13
14 Management and Budget reviewed and approved the ethics protocol. Individual data files are
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16 de-identified to prevent full anonymity of participants. Approval for conducting this secondary
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18 analysis of previously collected data was not required.
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25 In order to safeguard sensitive personal information, NESARC data are not available for public
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27 use. The restricted use data sets are maintained by the U.S. Census Bureau on behalf of NIAAA,
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29 and any requests to use NESARC data for replication or other purposes may be directed to the
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31 NIAAA coordinator for NESARC, Aaron White (whitea4@mail.nih.gov).
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Table 1: Wave 1 characteristics of the low mood sample and the rest of the NESARC Wave 2 sample. Weighted percentages^a (%) and standard error (s.e)

Variable	Total Wave 2 sample %	s.e.	Low mood sample ^b %	s.e.	Rest of sample ^c %	s.e.
Sample size	34,653		7,352		27,301	
Smoking status						
Current smoker	27.02	0.17	31.65	0.38	25.85	0.19
Former smoker	19.58	0.16	17.84	0.28	20.02	0.17
Never smoker	53.40	0.19	50.51	0.42	54.13	0.20
Wave 1 Suicide related outcomes (SRO)						
Want to die	11.42	0.10	25.55	0.27	7.84	0.10
Suicidal ideation	10.17	0.10	23.35	0.26	6.82	0.10
Suicide ideation	8.42	0.09	19.27	0.27	5.66	0.09
Suicide attempt	2.35	0.04	6.09	0.17	1.40	0.04
Demographics						
Gender						
Female	52.08	0.16	64.13	0.40	49.02	0.17
Male	47.92	0.16	35.87	0.40	50.98	0.17
Race/Ethnicity						
White	70.93	0.24	71.39	0.40	70.81	0.25
Black	10.75	0.20	10.61	0.22	10.79	0.21
Hispanic	11.56	0.10	11.20	0.15	11.65	0.12
Asian/Pac. Islander	4.36	0.06	3.50	0.10	4.58	0.06
Amer. Indian/Alaska Native	2.40	0.11	3.29	0.20	2.17	0.11
Age:						
18-19	4.02	0.07	4.47	0.15	3.91	0.08
20-29	17.78	0.14	19.28	0.30	17.40	0.15
30-44	30.90	0.17	32.28	0.29	30.54	0.18
45-64	31.08	0.15	31.64	0.24	30.94	0.17
65and over	16.22	0.10	12.32	0.25	17.21	0.12
Household Income:						
Less than \$20,000	20.35	0.17	25.07	0.32	19.15	0.19
\$20,000 to \$34,999	19.62	0.13	20.84	0.27	19.31	0.15
\$35,000 to \$59,999	26.27	0.16	24.85	0.31	26.63	0.17
\$60,000 and over	33.76	0.16	29.24	0.33	34.91	0.17
Marital status:						
Married	59.81	0.17	54.75	0.35	61.10	0.17
Cohabiting	3.25	0.06	3.60	0.11	3.16	0.07
Widowed	6.04	0.07	5.37	0.12	6.21	0.08
Divorced	8.45	0.06	10.73	0.19	7.87	0.07
Separated	1.98	0.04	2.98	0.12	1.73	0.04
Never Married	20.46	0.17	22.57	0.33	19.93	0.17

Education:						
Less than HS	14.65	0.13	16.25	0.26	14.24	0.14
High School diploma	29.03	0.18	29.35	0.35	28.95	0.20
College	56.32	0.22	54.40	0.38	56.81	0.23
Unemployed	7.16	0.09	12.31	0.25	5.85	0.09
Not unemployed	92.84	0.09	87.69	0.25	94.15	0.09
Urban	28.89	0.26	30.59	0.41	28.46	0.25
Rural/Not in Central City	71.11	0.26	69.41	0.41	71.54	0.25
Northeast	19.67	0.08	18.57	0.15	19.95	0.10
Midwest	23.15	0.16	23.52	0.32	23.05	0.21
South	35.21	0.15	34.89	0.39	35.29	0.19
West	21.97	0.11	23.02	0.23	21.71	0.15
Lifetime Psychiatric Disorders						
Axis I Disorders						
Alcohol Use	30.43	0.20	33.57	0.39	29.63	0.20
Substance Use	10.42	0.11	15.06	0.26	9.25	0.11
Nicotine Dependence	17.47	0.13	24.33	0.37	15.73	0.13
Anxiety disorder	17.88	0.17	31.00	0.34	14.55	0.17
Mood disorder	21.09	0.13	41.82	0.33	15.82	0.13
Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity	2.51	0.06	5.82	0.19	1.67	0.05
Axis II Disorders						
Borderline	5.89	0.08	18.44	0.28	2.70	0.07
Schizotypal	3.93	0.06	11.20	0.24	2.09	0.05
Narcissistic	6.18	0.08	11.88	0.23	4.74	0.08
Avoidant	2.32	0.05	6.14	0.17	1.36	0.05
Antisocial	3.63	0.07	5.86	0.21	3.07	0.07
Dependent	0.43	0.02	1.36	0.09	0.19	0.01
Obsessive-Compulsive	8.07	0.10	13.50	0.31	6.69	0.09
Paranoid	4.33	0.07	9.66	0.21	2.98	0.06
Schizoid	3.06	0.06	6.44	0.21	2.21	0.05
Histrionic	1.80	0.04	3.68	0.15	1.32	0.04

^aThe sampling weight variable in Wave 2 was used.

^bRespondents in NESARC Wave 2 who reported low mood lasting two weeks or more during the three-year interval covered in the Wave 2 NESARC and were asked the three suicidal behavior questions.

^cRespondents in NESARC Wave 2 who did not report low mood and were not asked the three suicidal questions.

Table 2: Weighted percentage of suicide related outcomes (SRO)^a reported in Wave 2 by Wave 1 characteristics, and unadjusted and adjusted odds ratios for risk of Wave 2 SRO among persons reporting low mood at the NESARC Wave 2 interview. (N=7352)^b

Variable	n/N	Weighted percentage of Wave 2 SRO	Standard error	OR ^c	95% CI	AOR ^d	95% CI
Smoking history							
Current smoker in Wave 1							
Former Smoker in Wave 1	809/2217	35.73	0.64	1.77	1.64, 1.90	1.41	1.28, 1.55
Never Smoker in Wave 1	339/1280	26.68	0.67	1.16	1.07, 1.25	1.32	1.21, 1.43
	981/3855	23.94	0.43	1.00		1.00	
SRO in Wave 1							
	1009/1940	50.01	0.76	3.84	3.60, 4.10	3.49	3.18, 3.84
Demographics							
Sex							
Female	1488/5090	28.51	0.36	1.05	0.98, 1.12	1.13	1.04, 1.22
Male	641/2262	27.54	0.59	1.00		1.00	
Race							
White	1253/4295	28.38	0.36	1.00		1.00	
Black	333/1352	26.53	0.70	0.91	0.84, 0.99	0.84	0.76, 0.92
Hispanic	438/1342	30.33	0.52	1.10	1.04, 1.17	1.26	1.16, 1.36
Asian/Pacific Islander	47/ 169	22.68	0.84	0.74	0.67, 0.82	0.93	0.82, 1.06
American Indian	58/ 194	27.18	2.81	0.94	0.71, 1.25	0.69	0.51, 0.92
Age							
Age 18-19	94/ 264	36.65	1.73	1.00		1.00	
Age 20-29	410/1287	31.40	0.67	0.83	0.69, 0.98	0.77	0.63, 0.94
Age 30-44	750/2438	29.32	0.62	0.75	0.64, 0.88	0.73	0.60, 0.90
Age 45-64	679/2395	26.82	0.63	0.66	0.56, 0.78	0.69	0.56, 0.84
Age 65 and over	196/ 968	20.90	0.93	0.47	0.39, 0.57	0.68	0.54, 0.86
Marital Status							
Married	836/3309	24.87	0.49	1.00		1.00	
Cohabiting	86/ 230	35.58	1.67	1.67	1.42, 1.96	1.27	1.07, 1.51
Widowed	128/ 562	24.26	1.09	0.97	0.85, 1.10	0.92	0.78, 1.07
Divorced	390/1104	36.01	0.84	1.70	1.57, 1.84	1.20	1.10, 1.32
Separated	130/ 338	37.93	1.78	1.85	1.58, 2.15	1.29	1.06, 1.56
Never married	559/2129	30.87	0.69	1.35	1.24, 1.46	0.97	0.87, 1.09
Education							
Less than High School	440/1358	31.58	0.92	1.17	1.04, 1.32	1.09	0.95, 1.25
High School Diploma	606/2111	28.27	0.74	1.00		1.00	
Some College or more	1083/3883	27.08	0.35	0.94	0.87, 1.02	1.08	1.00, 1.17
Lifetime Psychiatric Disorder							
Axis I Disorders							
Alcohol Use	811/2350	32.74	0.60	1.40	1.31, 1.49	0.95	0.87, 1.04
Substance Use	427/1033	38.42	0.94	1.75	1.61, 1.89	0.98	0.88, 1.09

Anxiety	843/2278	37.57	0.60	1.72	1.62, 1.83	1.08	1.01, 1.17
Mood	1217/3151	36.62	0.48	2.04	1.92, 2.17	0.77	0.70, 0.84
Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder	208/ 394	51.14	1.42	2.87	2.56, 3.22	1.56	1.36, 1.79
Axis II Disorders							
Borderline	821/1433	55.75	0.79	4.49	4.22, 4.77	2.91	2.69, 3.16
Schizotypal	485/ 886	53.41	1.26	3.44	3.09, 3.84	1.50	1.31, 1.72
Narcissistic	443/ 993	42.49	1.01	2.08	1.89, 2.29	1.03	0.92, 1.14
Avoidant	245/ 446	51.87	1.37	2.97	2.66, 3.32	1.29	1.05, 1.58
Antisocial	188/ 395	41.55	1.39	1.89	1.68, 2.13	0.85	0.72, 1.01
Dependent	58/ 90	56.90	2.90	3.44	2.74, 4.30	1.04	0.76, 1.41
Ob-Com	377/ 961	36.07	1.05	1.53	1.39, 1.69	0.90	0.80, 1.00
Paranoid	364/ 756	45.74	1.16	2.37	2.14, 2.62	0.95	0.82, 1.10
Schizoid	210/ 473	43.81	1.26	2.10	1.89, 2.33	1.01	0.88, 1.16
Histrionic	129/ 266	44.42	1.83	2.10	1.82, 2.43	0.76	0.63, 0.93

^aSRO (Suicide related outcome: feel like want to die, suicide ideation, suicide attempt; 0=None, 1=any SRO).

^bMissing observations for specific variables: Race – 43, Hispanic origin – 2, age – 13, marital status- 4, educational attainment – 70, household income-2544, unemployed – 28, Wave 2 individual suicide related outcomes – 12-18 “unknown” changed to “no”. Treatment of unknown values in determination of psychiatric diagnosis variables is known only to original NESARC project staff at NIAAA.

^cOdds Ratios (OR) and 95% confidence intervals (CI) based on simple regression models estimating Wave 2 SRO as a function of an individual predictor variable.

^dAdjusted Odds Ratios (AOR) and 95% CI based on a multiple logistic regression estimating Wave 2 SRO as a function of age, sex, race/ethnicity, marital status, income, education, unemployed status, Census region, urban residence, smoking status, Axis I and Axis II disorders (as described in text), and lifetime SRO prior to Wave 1.

Table 3: Effects on Wave 2 suicide related outcomes (SRO) according to smoking status change as reported in NESARC Wave 1 and Wave 2 interviews.

Smoking status in Wave 1 to Wave 2	n/N	Weighted percentage ^b (standard error)	Wave 2 SRO ^a	
			AOR ^c	95% CI
1. Consistent never smoker (in Wave 1 and Wave 2)	897/3653	47.8 (0.40)	1.00	
2. Long-term former smoker (in Wave 1 and Wave 2)	293/1185	16.4 (0.26)	1.22	1.12, 1.34
3. Recent former smoker (current smoker in Wave 1, former smoker in Wave 2)	126/393	5.3 (0.14)	1.37	1.16, 1.63
4. Persistent current smoker (in Wave 1 and Wave 2)	683/1824	26.3 (0.35)	1.50	1.35, 1.66
5. New current smoker (never smoker in Wave 1, current smoker in Wave 2)	82/194	2.6 (0.10)	1.82	1.51, 2.19
6. Relapser (former smoker in Wave 1, current smoker in Wave 2)	46/95	1.5 (0.08)	3.42	2.85, 4.11
	N=7352 ^d			

^aAny of three items: want to die, suicidal ideation, suicide attempt

^bThe sampling weight variable in Wave 2 was used.

^cAORs are adjusted odds ratio with 95% confidence intervals (CI) based on multiple logistic regression of Wave 2 SRO as a function of age, sex, race/ethnicity, marital status, income, education, unemployed status, Census region, urban residence, smoking status, Axis I and Axis II disorders (as described in text), and lifetime SRO reported in Wave 1.

^dThe seventh group (n=8), which consisted of persons who were never smokers in Wave 1, began to smoke and then stopped smoking in Wave 2, was too small for a valid assessment of risk.

Table 4: Combined effects of smoking status and prior SRO^a reported in Wave 1
on a) Wave 2 SRO and b) Wave 2 current smoking

Wave 1 Smoking status and Wave 1 SRO	n/N	Weighted percentages (standard error)	AOR ^b	95% CI
a) Effect on Wave 2 SRO				
Never smoker - No prior SRO (referent)	550 / 2978	17.5 (0.4)	1.00	N.A. ^c
Never smoker - Prior SRO	431 / 877	46.8 (1.0)	4.12	3.65, 4.64
Former smoker - No prior SRO	187 / 968	20.6 (0.8)	1.42	1.28, 1.57
Former smoker - Prior SRO	152 / 312	48.2 (1.6)	4.58	3.60, 5.82
Current smoker - No prior SRO	383 / 1466	26.6 (0.7)	1.56	1.41, 1.74
Current smoker - Prior SRO	426 / 751	54.1 (1.2)	4.77	3.70, 5.87
b) Effect on Wave 2 Current smoking				
Never smoker – No prior SRO (referent)	166 / 2978	5.3 (0.2)	1.00	N.A. ^c
Never smoker – Prior SRO	28 / 877	4.3 (0.4)	0.70	0.60, 0.82
Former smoker – No prior SRO	71 / 968	8.6 (0.5)	2.20	1.77, 2.31
Former smoker – Prior SRO	24 / 312	6.9 (0.6)	1.15	0.83, 1.61
Current smoker – No prior SRO	1204 / 1466	82.7 (0.5)	82.9	73.7, 93.2
Current smoker – Prior SRO	620 / 751	84.2 (0.8)	77.0	57.6, 104.8

^aAny of three items: want to die, suicidal ideation, suicide attempt

^bAORs are adjusted odds ratios with 95% confidence intervals (CI) based on multiple logistic regression models controlling for demographics and psychiatric history at Wave 1 (shown in Table 1).

^cNot applicable

STROBE Statement—Checklist of items that should be included in reports of *cohort studies*

	Item No	Recommendation
Title and abstract	1	(a) Indicate the study's design with a commonly used term in the title or the abstract (b) Provide in the abstract an informative and balanced summary of what was done and what was found
Introduction		
Background/rationale	2	Explain the scientific background and rationale for the investigation being reported
Objectives	3	State specific objectives, including any prespecified hypotheses
Methods		
Study design	4	Present key elements of study design early in the paper
Setting	5	Describe the setting, locations, and relevant dates, including periods of recruitment, exposure, follow-up, and data collection
Participants	6	(a) Give the eligibility criteria, and the sources and methods of selection of participants. Describe methods of follow-up (b) For matched studies, give matching criteria and number of exposed and unexposed
Variables	7	Clearly define all outcomes, exposures, predictors, potential confounders, and effect modifiers. Give diagnostic criteria, if applicable
Data sources/ measurement	8*	For each variable of interest, give sources of data and details of methods of assessment (measurement). Describe comparability of assessment methods if there is more than one group
Bias	9	Describe any efforts to address potential sources of bias
Study size	10	Explain how the study size was arrived at
Quantitative variables	11	Explain how quantitative variables were handled in the analyses. If applicable, describe which groupings were chosen and why
Statistical methods	12	(a) Describe all statistical methods, including those used to control for confounding (b) Describe any methods used to examine subgroups and interactions (c) Explain how missing data were addressed (d) If applicable, explain how loss to follow-up was addressed (e) Describe any sensitivity analyses
Results		
Participants	13*	(a) Report numbers of individuals at each stage of study—eg numbers potentially eligible, examined for eligibility, confirmed eligible, included in the study, completing follow-up, and analysed (b) Give reasons for non-participation at each stage (c) Consider use of a flow diagram
Descriptive data	14*	(a) Give characteristics of study participants (eg demographic, clinical, social) and information on exposures and potential confounders (b) Indicate number of participants with missing data for each variable of interest (c) Summarise follow-up time (eg, average and total amount)
Outcome data	15*	Report numbers of outcome events or summary measures over time
Main results	16	(a) Give unadjusted estimates and, if applicable, confounder-adjusted estimates and their precision (eg, 95% confidence interval). Make clear which confounders were adjusted for and why they were included (b) Report category boundaries when continuous variables were categorized (c) If relevant, consider translating estimates of relative risk into absolute risk for a meaningful time period

1	Other analyses	17	Report other analyses done—eg analyses of subgroups and interactions, and
2			sensitivity analyses
3	Discussion		
4	Key results	18	Summarise key results with reference to study objectives
5	Limitations	19	Discuss limitations of the study, taking into account sources of potential bias or
6			imprecision. Discuss both direction and magnitude of any potential bias
7	Interpretation	20	Give a cautious overall interpretation of results considering objectives, limitations,
8			multiplicity of analyses, results from similar studies, and other relevant evidence
9	Generalisability	21	Discuss the generalisability (external validity) of the study results
10	Other information		
11	Funding	22	Give the source of funding and the role of the funders for the present study and, if
12			applicable, for the original study on which the present article is based
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*Give information separately for exposed and unexposed groups.

Note: An Explanation and Elaboration article discusses each checklist item and gives methodological background and published examples of transparent reporting. The STROBE checklist is best used in conjunction with this article (freely available on the Web sites of PLoS Medicine at <http://www.plosmedicine.org/>, Annals of Internal Medicine at <http://www.annals.org/>, and Epidemiology at <http://www.epidem.com/>). Information on the STROBE Initiative is available at <http://www.strobe-statement.org>.