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Guest Comment: World No Tobacco Day 2017

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Life is Health; Health is wealth; Don't puff your life away!!

It is my pleasure and honor to write this guest column for International Healthcare Research Journal (IHRJ). I am grateful to the team for giving me this opportunity to share my views on **World No Tobacco Day** in the forthcoming issue.

World no tobacco day was introduced by **World Health Organization (WHO)**. It was first celebrated on 7th April 1988 by passing a resolution WHA 40.38 as "World No Smoking Day" which was later amended by passing another resolution WHA 42.19 and changed to "**World No Tobacco Day**" on 31st May 1989.

In India the use of tobacco is considered as a social taboo. Tobacco use both in smoking and smokeless form is increasing despite of establishment of effective tobacco control policies.

Smoked tobacco products include cigarettes, cigars, bidis, and kreteks. Some people also smoke loose tobacco in a pipe or hookah (water pipe). Chewed tobacco products include chewing tobacco, snuff and dip.

Tobacco use in India was estimated to be 46 percent among the population of 15 years and above. It is also associated with the increasing risk of oral cancer, cancer of head and neck, oesophagus and pancreas. According to WHO, tobacco use is the second major cause of death (nearly 6 million) and out of these, an estimated 1 million deaths occur in India, which may escalate to 8 million deaths per year world wide by 2030.

All the tobacco products contain nicotine which is a nitrogen-containing chemical - an alkaloid, which is made by several types of plants. *Nicotiana tabacum* is the type of nicotine found in tobacco plants. The nicotine in any tobacco product readily absorbs into the blood and immediately stimulates the adrenal glands to release the hormone epinephrine (adrenaline).

Epinephrine stimulates the central nervous system and increases blood pressure, breathing, and heart rate. The other chemicals in tobacco smoke, such as acetaldehyde, may enhance nicotine's effects on the brain. Therefore it is difficult to quit tobacco.

This day is intended to encourage a **24 hour period of abstinence** from all forms of tobacco consumption across the globe and also to encourage the people to reduce or stop the use of tobacco products in near future. The Indian government at public platform is also making people aware not to use such products as they not only cause cancer but also have an indirect adverse effect on your family. The advertisements which are made compulsory in movie theaters or the pictures which are displayed on the cigarette packs or gutka/khani packets are some of the examples.

As dental health care professionals it's our duty to first of all identify such cases and follow the **5-A principle** of intervention i.e. (**ask, advice, assess, assist and arrange**)

and the **5-R principle** of motivation i.e. (**relevance, risks, rewards, roadblocks and repetition**), so that the youth of today can save themselves from this deadly habit. The role of nicotine replacement therapy in form of commercially available chewing gums, patches or inhalers give a synergic effect to help quit tobacco. Drug de-addiction centers and counselling of such people is also useful in combatting the use of tobacco.

I personally appeal to raise our voices if we see such activities around us and make this campaign successful and together we can achieve this goal.

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