

# Nicotine dependence levels in pre and during pandemic and its correlations with COVID-19 phobia among healthy men during controlled social life: a sample of primary care population

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June 17, 2021

## Abstract

**BACKGROUND:** This study aims to determine nicotine dependence levels in pre and during pandemic and its correlations with COVID-19 phobia among healthy men during controlled social life: a sample of primary care population. **METHODS:** This cross-sectional study was conducted with 472 healthy men in Çorum, Black Sea Region, Turkey between February 2019 and October 2020. An online questionnaire was used to collect data including demographic profile, smoking behavior, intention to quit, Fagerström Nicotine Dependence test (FTND) pre and during COVID-19 pandemic and COVID-19 phobia scale. **RESULTS:** In this study, a percentage change of +6.2, +0.8, +1.9, -2.7, -5.1 was found in very low, low, medium, high and very high dependence categories respectively between pre-pandemic and during controlled social life in pandemic. A percentage change of +2.8 was seen in terms of intention to quit smoking. The mean score for COVID-19 phobia was  $65.9 \pm 15.8$  and almost two-thirds of the participants (62%) had medium and high COVID-19 phobia. Men with high/very high dependence had significantly more COVID-19 phobia than the other two groups. There was a significant correlation between FTND scores and COVID-19 phobia. **CONCLUSIONS:** There were considerable changes in dependence levels and COVID-19 phobia was more common in high/very high dependence group. Controlled social life should be considered a golden opportunity for predicting levels of nicotine dependence and will bring benefit for lower smoking prevalence. COVID-19, Nicotine dependence, Phobia, men, Primary health care.

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