Investigating the causal effect of smoking on hay fever and asthma: a Mendelian randomization meta-analysis in the CARTA consortium

Observational studies on smoking and risk of hay fever and asthma have shown inconsistent results. However, observational studies may be biased by confounding and reverse causation. Mendelian randomization uses genetic variants as markers of exposures to examine causal effects. We examined the causal effect of smoking on hay fever and asthma by using the smoking-associated single nucleotide polymorphism (SNP) rs16969968/rs1051730. We included 231,020 participants from 22 population-based studies. Observational analyses showed that current vs never smokers had lower risk of hay fever (odds ratio (OR) = 0.68, 95% confidence interval (CI): 0.61, 0.76; P < 0.001) and allergic sensitization (OR = 0.74, 95% CI: 0.64, 0.86; P < 0.001), but similar asthma risk (OR = 1.00, 95% CI: 0.91, 1.09; P = 0.967). Mendelian randomization analyses in current smokers showed a slightly lower risk of hay fever (OR = 0.958, 95% CI: 0.920, 0.998; P = 0.041), a lower risk of allergic sensitization (OR = 0.92, 95% CI: 0.84, 1.02; P = 0.117), but higher risk of asthma (OR = 1.06, 95% CI: 1.01, 1.11; P = 0.020) per smoking-increasing allele. Our results suggest that smoking may be causally related to a higher risk of asthma and a slightly lower risk of hay fever. However, the adverse events associated with smoking limit its clinical significance.

General information
State: Published
Organisations: Research Centre for Prevention and Health, University of Bristol, University of Copenhagen, Bispebjerg-Frederiksberg Hospitals, University of South Australia, MRC Unit for Lifelong Health and Ageing, Norwegian University of Science and Technology, St. Olav's University Hospital, Helmholtz Zentrum München, National Institute for Health and Welfare, University of Glasgow, Leiden University Medical Center, University Hospital Essen, Heimsley Medical Centre, University of Southern Denmark, University College London, University of Essex, University of Greifswald, University of Helsinki
Number of pages: 9
Publication date: 2017
Peer-reviewed: Yes

Publication information
Journal: Scientific Reports
Volume: 7
Issue number: 1
Article number: 2224
ISSN (Print): 2045-2322
Ratings:
BFI (2018): BFI-level 1
Web of Science (2018): Indexed yes
BFI (2017): BFI-level 1
Scopus rating (2017): CiteScore 4.36 SJR 1.533 SNIP 1.245
Web of Science (2017): Impact factor 4.122
Web of Science (2017): Indexed yes
BFI (2016): BFI-level 1
Scopus rating (2016): CiteScore 4.63 SJR 1.692 SNIP 1.354
Web of Science (2016): Impact factor 4.259
Web of Science (2016): Indexed yes
BFI (2015): BFI-level 1
Scopus rating (2015): CiteScore 5.3 SJR 2.034 SNIP 1.597
Web of Science (2015): Impact factor 5.228
Web of Science (2015): Indexed yes
BFI (2014): BFI-level 1
Scopus rating (2014): CiteScore 4.75 SJR 2.163 SNIP 1.554
Web of Science (2014): Impact factor 5.578
Web of Science (2014): Indexed yes