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Cumulative effect of smoking on disease burden and multimorbidity in adult-onset asthma

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Disease burden and multimorbidity in adult-onset asthma increase dose dependently with smoked pack-years <http://bit.ly/311627j>

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To the Editor:

Smokers and patients with heavy smoking history have usually been excluded from clinical studies of asthma. Thus, little is known about the impact of lifelong, cumulative tobacco exposure on asthma [1, 2]. The effect of smoking status (never-, ex- or current smoker) on disease burden of asthma has been more commonly recognised, but the impact of smoking history in pack-years has rarely been evaluated [3–6]. The impact of smoked pack-years has been previously reported only by few studies, showing adverse effects on lung function and asthma control [5, 7–10], whereas no significant differences in healthcare use, asthma-related questionnaires or medication use were reported among ex-smokers with severe asthma when patients were categorised based on smoked pack-years [4]. Assessment of pack-years is an easy and usable tool in clinical work, and the intensity of smoking has been proposed to be an even more important factor than plain smoking status [5]. Thus, our aim was to evaluate the impact of cumulative smoking history, *i.e.* pack-years, on hospitalisations, comorbidities and symptoms in adult-onset asthma, as a part of the Seinäjoki Adult Asthma Study (SAAS).