

NICOTINE REPLACEMENT THERAPY WAS AS EFFECTIVE IN THE PRESENCE OR ABSENCE OF A MEDICAL PRESCRIPTION : 12 MONTHS RESULTS

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CONTEXT AND OBJECTIVES

From December 1999, nicotine replacement therapy (NRT) is available without prescription in French community pharmacies. A prospective study was conducted in 2001 to evaluate the use and effectiveness of NRT delivered in community pharmacies.

METHODS

■ PHARMACISTS' ENROLMENT

240 pharmacies took part in this study. All of them were volunteer. The recruitment was achieved among some pharmacists involved in health education (who commonly order documentation to the Cespharm).

■ "SMOKERS" ' ENROLMENT

During one month, all "smokers" who bought NRT in these 240 pharmacies were asked to complete a questionnaire and to provide consent to a back phone call 3 months and 12 months later.

Among the 598 "smokers" who had completed the initial questionnaire and bought NRT for themselves, 284 accepted to receive a back phone call. 267 "smokers" were included in the survey.

RESULTS

■ STUDIED POPULATION ("SMOKERS")

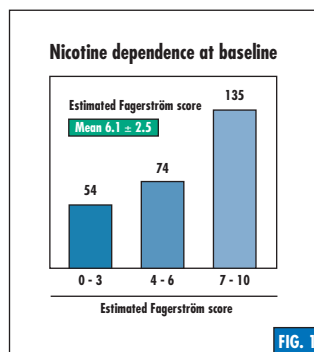
General characteristics

The studied population (n=267) had the following characteristics : mean age of 41 ± 11 ranging from 18 to 69 ; 47% female and 53% male ; 80% were professionally active, 6% were out of job and 7% were retired.

Nicotinic dependence rate

Thanks to information given by the questionnaire, an estimation of the initial Fagerström test score could be calculated (from responses to the two most important questions of the Fagerström test : number of cigarettes /day - delay for the first cigarette).

- The mean estimated Fagerström test score of the studied population at inclusion was 6,1 ± 2,5 with :
 - 135 highly dependent "smokers" (score : 7-10)
 - 74 fairly dependent "smokers" (score : 4-6)
 - 54 slightly or no dependent "smokers" (score : 0-3) (Fig. 1)

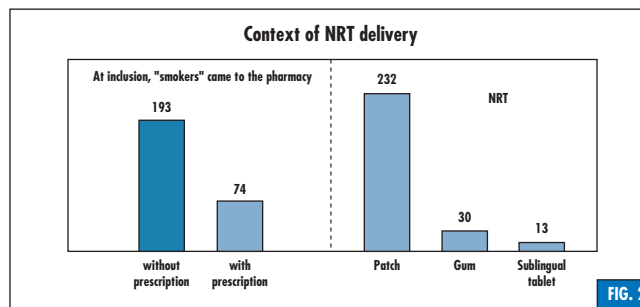


- The initial nicotinic dependence rates were not significantly different for "smokers" with a medical prescription (estimated score : 6,4 ± 2,3) and "smokers" without prescription (estimated score : 5,9 ± 2,5).

■ CONTEXT OF NRT DELIVERY

At inclusion :

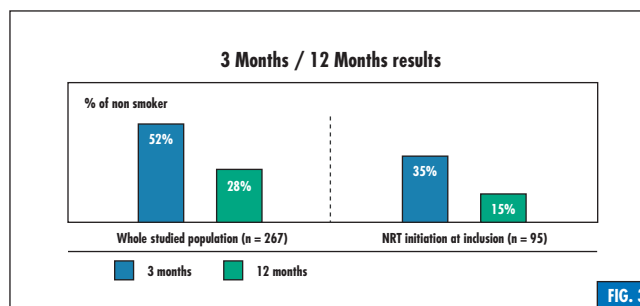
- 64% of "smokers" came to the pharmacy for renewal of their treatment and 36% came for initiating an NRT treatment.
- 72% of "smokers" (n=193) came and bought NRT without prescription ("non prescription group") while 28% (n=74) had a medical prescription for NRT treatment ("prescription group") (Fig. 2).



■ ABSTINENCE RATE AT 3 MONTHS AND 12 MONTHS

• Global abstinence rate (Fig. 3)

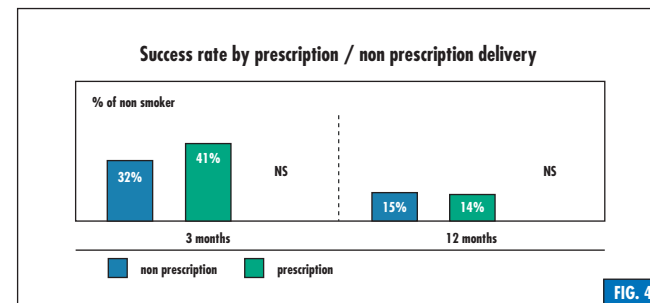
On the whole studied population (n=267) and according to « smokers »' declaration, 52% and 28% of them were non-smokers respectively at 3 months and 12 months (all lost to follow-up have been considered as failure).



• Abstinence rate of "smokers" who initiated the NRT treatment at inclusion (Fig. 3)

Within the subpopulation of "smokers" who initiated the NRT treatment at inclusion (n=95), the abstinence rates were 35% at 3 months and 15% at 12 months.

• Abstinence rate in prescription / non prescription groups (Fig. 4)



Within the subpopulation of "smokers" who initiated NRT treatment at inclusion (n=95), the abstinence rates were :

- 32% for the "non prescription group" and 41% for the "prescription group" at 3 months ;
- 15% for the "non prescription group" and 14% for the "prescription group" at 12 months.

→ The success rates at 3 months and 12 months of smoking cessation with a NRT treatment were not significantly different in the presence or absence of a medical prescription.

CONCLUSION

In this survey, the abstinence rates at 3 months and 12 months of patients treated by NRT are similar in the presence or absence of medical follow-up. These data underline the quality and importance of the pharmaceutical care of people willing to quit smoking.

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