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## Association of Smoking with Insulin Requirement and Serum Triglyceride Level

Masbad et al.<sup>1</sup> recently reported on their interesting study of the influence of smoking in 163 insulin-treated adults with diabetes. In many respects there were no significant differences between smokers and nonsmokers, but their smokers required higher dosages of insulin and had higher serum triglyceride levels than nonsmokers. These investigators suggested that these statistically significant associations might

reflect an effect of smoking. However, an alternate possibility is that these associations were the result of confounding variables.

We therefore examined in another, larger group of 970 adults with diabetes the relationship of cigarette smoking with insulin requirement and serum triglyceride concentration. Among 246 Oklahoma Indians with diabetes who smoked, 22% were being treated with insulin, while 20% of 526 who did not smoke were receiving insulin. This difference between 20% and 22% was not statistically significant. In contrast to the study cited above, in our insulin-treated patients (198), mean daily insulin dosage was somewhat higher in our nonsmokers (58 U daily) than in our smokers (47 U). Mean serum triglyceride values were not higher in our smokers (222 mg/dl) than in nonsmokers (226 mg/dl). Thus, in our study there was no evidence of an unfavorable effect of smoking on insulin requirement or serum triglyceride level.

Confounding variables may, of course, mask associations, but we could not identify any factors that could have hidden an effect of smoking on these variables. The characteristics of our population have been described in some detail.<sup>2,3</sup>

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