Letter to the Editor

Raynaud’s phenomenon

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The mini-review [1] about Raynaud’s phenomenon (RP) mentions in passing that passive smoking ‘may be harmful’ to patients with RP. Two cases of RP definitely linked to second-hand smoking (apparently causally) have been noted in the literature [2]. A striking factor shared in these two cases is that they were both consecutively married to the same heavily smoking man. Also, both women, once they were no longer exposed to his heavy tobacco-smoke pollution (4.5 packs a day), experienced disappearance of RP.

About 88% of non-tobacco users aged 4 years and older have detectable levels of cotinine in their blood [3]. In light of this widespread exposure, if a large proportion of young women (as high as 20–30%) experience RP [4], then more than just hypothetical statements and case-by-case reports about an association between RP and passive smoking should be emanating from the scientific community. Well-conducted studies about RP and passive smoking are an urgent must.

References