



## Japan Society for Tobacco Control

### 日本禁煙学会

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Mr. Taro Aso, Minister of Finance

Mr. Akishi Kosakada, Tobacco and Salt Business Manager, Bureau of General Affairs, Ministry of Finance

Mr. Takashi Igarashi, Committee Chairperson, Tobacco Businesses Subcommittee; Board Chairperson, National Center for Health and Development

Mr. Takashi Kadowaki, Interim Committee Member, Full-time Visiting Professor, Teikyo University,

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### **Please replace the health warnings on tobacco packages with the images set by international standards.**

Sakuta Manabu, Chairperson, General incorporated association Japan Society for Tobacco Control

Heretofore, on 30 November 2015, 15 January 2016 and other dates, the Japan Society for Tobacco Control as an independent society and together with committees aiming to limit passive smoking (with 103 other domestic organizations) have asked to revise the health warnings on tobacco packages (packs, cartons and other containers) according to international standards.

I humbly ask this time again.

Tobacco (with nicotine) has greater addictiveness than cannabis or stimulants<sup>1)</sup>. Without knowing tobacco is dangerous, many people have handed it out, continue to smoke from addiction, and tragically shorten their lives<sup>1)</sup>. Health warnings on tobacco packages together with increased tobacco taxes are considered good measures to remedy this situation.

1) Nutt D, et al. Development of a rational scale to assess the harm of drugs of potential misuse. Lancet 369:1047-53,2007.

### Chronicle

- ① According to the Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC), more than 100 countries around the world are adopting images that convey health warnings, and our country should also abide by this international standard. (Figure ①)

Regarding images that convey health warnings, the guidelines are stipulated as follows.

### Guideline 14

Article 11 (1) paragraph (b) (v) advises that the packages and labels of tobacco products regarding health warnings and messages be displayed using illustrations and photographs.

Research has shown that health warnings that contain images in addition to written statements are much more effective compared those with only written statements.

Also, warnings that include images can be expected to be effective for those with low literacy and even for those who do not understand the displayed language. When signatory nations regulate packages and labels of tobacco products, they should use health warnings with culturally appropriate images that use multicolored printing. They should also consider publishing warnings with images on multiple main surfaces of tobacco packages.

#### Guideline 15

Research has shown that health warnings that display only written statements are less effective compared those with both written statements and photos. Health warnings with both

- attract more attention
- have a greater influence on smokers
- have an influence that lasts longer
- more clearly convey the risks of health damages from using tobacco
- increase awareness of health damages from tobacco more and motivate people to quit smoking more
- enhance the intention and ability to quit smoking
- increase the frequency of attempts to quit smoking

#### Guideline 16

Health warnings and messages that use images are likely to reduce the brand image of tobacco packages and its appeal.

Accordingly, as for our country approving and establishing guideline 14,

I advise that that the packages and labels of tobacco products regarding health warnings and messages be displayed using illustrations and photographs. Research has shown that health warnings that contain images in addition to written statements are much more effective compared those with only written statements.

“Also, warnings that include images can be expected to be effective for those with low literacy and even for those who do not understand the displayed language. When signatory nations regulate packages and labels of tobacco products, they should use health warnings with culturally appropriate images that use multicolored printing.”

Accordingly, it is advisable to display health warnings that use illustrations and photographs, and this is also much more effective compared to the case with only written statements.

Also, warnings that include images can be expected to be effective for those with low literacy and even for those who do not understand the displayed language, and when minors start to experiment with smoking tobacco, I expect the images to create an inhibiting effect.



☒①

Figure ①

- ② Please make the surface area of the images at least 50%, not less than 30% as it is currently.

Even though our country has ratified the convention agreement, it has not enforced the guidelines, and the surface area for health warnings remains less than 30% of the total.

The guidelines of Article 11 of the FCTC, which our country has approved, have determined the details of displaying which images at what percentage of the total surface area.

## Guideline 12

Convention Article 11 (1) (b) (iv) advises that the warnings of health damage and other messages on the packages of tobacco products should cover at least 50% of the main surface area and not less than 30% of main surface area.

Evidence from research has shown that the effectiveness of health warnings and other messages increases with the size of the display. Parties to the convention should consider stipulating that the health warnings on the main surfaces of tobacco product packages should be at least 50% of that area and should occupy the largest possible area. Furthermore, the display of health warnings should be in bold and highly distinctive colors and should use designs and colors that are easy to see and to read in a font size with high visibility.

### Guideline 13

When calculating the proportion that health warnings should occupy of the whole display surface, if a borderline to enclose the health warnings is needed, the ratifying country will consider excluding its area from the area that is used for the health warning according to the framework convention. In other words, for the area that is used according to the framework convention, only the health warnings will be calculated for the proportion of the whole, and the borderline should not be included in representing the area of the warning itself.

In sum, the display area of the health warnings in Japan has currently not reached what FCTC has hoped to attain, and it should consider ending the violation of that international convention for the future.

- ③ Several countries have already determined the design of about 10 plain packages, and our country should also follow these designs. (Figure 2)

For guideline 46, plain packaging is written as follows.

### Guideline 46

“Parties to the convention will consider ways to encourage standard colors and designs that restrict or prohibit the use of logos, colors, brand images and promotional information with plain packaging. This can enhance the visibility and effectiveness of health warnings. Plain packaging avoids distracting attention from health warnings and prevents packages with commercial designs that can imply that certain products are safer than others.

Plain packaging is not mandatory, but is recommended.

Plain packaging avoids distracting attention from health warnings and prevents packages with commercial designs that can imply that certain products are safer than others. For example, whenever a cigarette is slender, then governments may need to regulate the possible implication that if you smoke cigarettes, then you can lose weight.

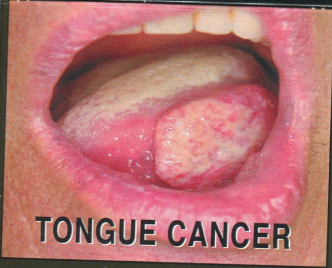
Furthermore, in many countries like Thailand, Korea, Russia, the United Kingdom and Australia; tobacco displayed at stores and exhibitions is prohibited; advertising that promotes selling is also prohibited. Because traditional tobacco packages themselves effectively become advertisements, plain packages can prevent this kind of advertising.

This is the end.

Figure ③ [Australia, 2017](#)



**SMOKING  
CAUSES  
MOUTH CANCER**



Winfield  
Original Grey + Taste Flow Filter

20

**SMOKING CAUSES  
PERIPHERAL  
VASCULAR  
DISEASE**



Bond Street  
Red

20

**SMOKING  
HARMS  
UNBORN BABIES**



Dunhill Mixtures  
New York Crush

20

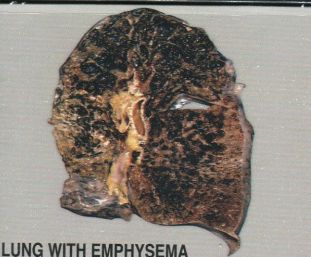
**SMOKING  
CAUSES KIDNEY  
AND BLADDER  
CANCER**



Bond Street  
Blue

20

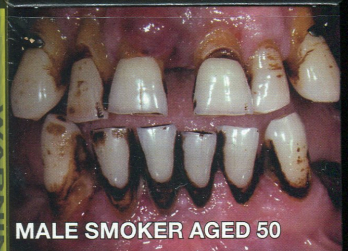
**SMOKING  
CAUSES  
EMPHYSEMA**



Winfield  
Original Red + Taste Flow Filter

20

**SMOKING  
DAMAGES YOUR  
GUMS AND  
TEETH**



Marlboro  
Red + Firm Filter

20

**SMOKING CAUSES PERIPHERAL  
VASCULAR DISEASE**  
**GANGRENE**

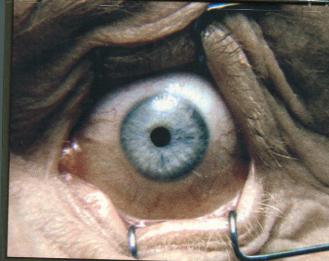


Smoking narrows and blocks your blood vessels, reducing blood and oxygen supply to your extremities (feet, legs, hands, arms). Over time this can result in pain, open sores that don't heal and gangrene. Gangrene leads to amputation.

Want advice on quitting? Call Quitline 13 7848, talk to your doctor or pharmacist, or visit [www.quitnow.gov.au](http://www.quitnow.gov.au)

AUSTRALIAN FIRE RISK STANDARD COMPLIANT.  
USE CARE IN DISPOSAL.

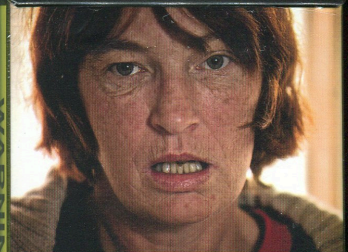
**SMOKING  
CAUSES  
BLINDNESS**



Winfield  
Original Blue + Taste Flow Filter

20

**SMOKING  
DOUBLES YOUR  
RISK OF STROKE**



Bond Street  
Gold

20