



**Japan Society for Tobacco Control**

**日本禁煙学会**

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**Because smoking aggravates symptoms of the novel coronavirus, reduces the efficacy of its vaccine, and more easily causes ongoing conditions, what would you think about more carefully monitoring such harmful products when they are sold without much regulation?**

I would like to inform you that people using tobacco products are extremely vulnerable to the new coronavirus. I think that people responsible for product liabilities should publicize the information about hazards to smokers.

[https://elaws.e-gov.go.jp/document?lawid=406AC0000000085\\_20200401\\_429AC0000000045](https://elaws.e-gov.go.jp/document?lawid=406AC0000000085_20200401_429AC0000000045)

Prime Minister Fumio Kishida

For the attention of the Cabinet Secretariat

Minister of Finance Shunichi Suzuki

Minister of Health, Labor and Welfare Katsunobu Kato

28 November 2022

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

Novel coronavirus and smoking:

The novel coronavirus has afflicted the world during three long years, and the following three points have become clear.

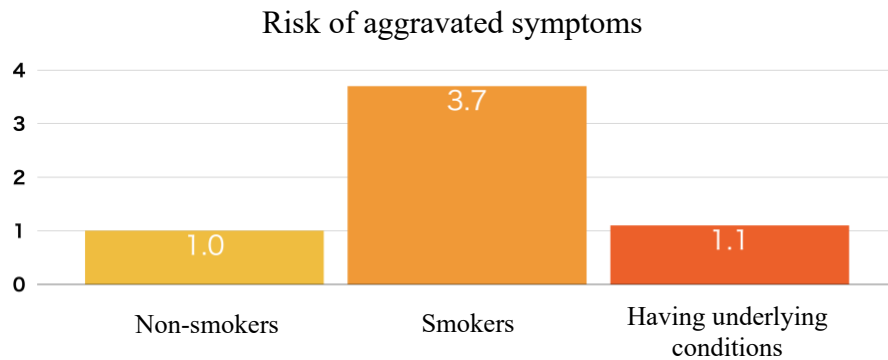
In brief, it has been shown that

1 If you smoke, you are more likely to become seriously ill or die.

2 The efficacy of vaccines is lower than for non-smokers

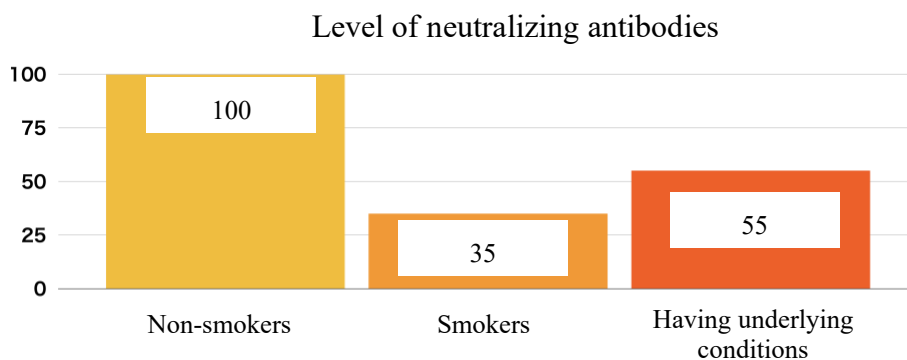
3 Sequela (ongoing pathological conditions commonly called long COVID) tend to last longer

Point 1 was first identified by Michiyuki Matsuzaki, the director of this society, and was formally analyzed by Guan et al.<sup>1)</sup> on 28 February 2020. I then reported this information, and the FCA (FCTC Alliance) acknowledged it too. It was later acknowledged by the WHO based on a paper by Liu et al.,<sup>2)</sup> and on 20 March 2020 the WHO director general announced the association in the opening remarks, establishing worldwide guidance for tobacco control. Recently, a paper from Yokohama City University<sup>3)</sup> stated that smoking was the worst among the risk factors for aggravated symptoms during the Delta and Omicron epidemics, associated with nearly four times the severity. **This risk was greater than for those having underlying medical conditions like obesity.**



•Fumihiko Ogawa et al: • Published: October 25, 2022  
 • <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0273134>

Regarding point 2, papers have been published in Europe, the United States and Japan showing that smokers produce no more than about half of the level of neutralizing antibodies that non-smokers can produce. Similar results have been published for those using heated tobacco<sup>4,5</sup>.

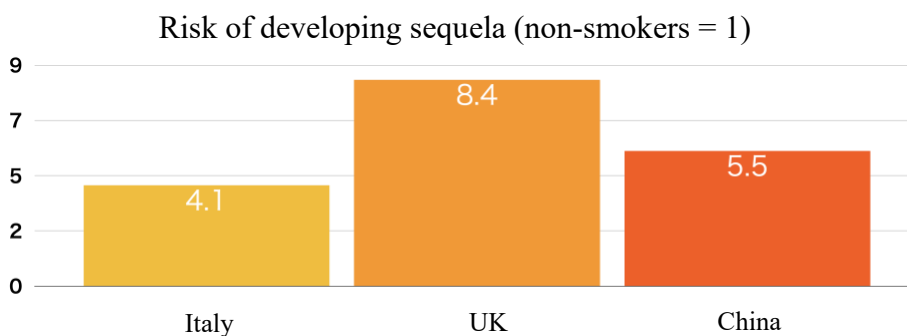


Moncunill G(ISGlobal, Hospital Clínic, Universitat de Barcelona, Barcelona, Catalonia, Spain).

As for point 3, since around May 2020, studies have identified sequela of the novel coronavirus (ongoing pathological conditions commonly called long COVID) to include

fatigue, shortness of breath, impairment of taste and smell, adverse effects on thinking and memory, hair loss and joint pain. For smokers, the risk of developing such sequela is 4.1 times higher according to an Italian study<sup>6)</sup>, 8.4 times higher according a British study<sup>7)</sup>, and the risk of depression among coronavirus patients is 5.5 times higher for smokers according to a Chinese paper<sup>8)</sup>.

Furthermore, there are also Japanese data<sup>9)</sup> which show that smokers took longer to recover from the sequela of coronavirus.



As the person responsible for product liabilities, you must inform all users of tobacco products about these facts, urgently, and I kindly ask that you please take steps like publicity campaigns in this matter.

## References

1) Guan W, Ni Z, Hu Y, et al. Clinical Characteristics of Coronavirus Disease 2019 in China. N Engl J Med , April 30, 2020; 382:1708-1720 doi: 10.1056/NEJMoa2002032.

/Viewed 1st Oct. 2022

2) Liu W, Tao ZW, Wang L, et al. Analysis of factors associated with disease outcomes in hospitalized patients with 2019 novel coronavirus disease. Chin Med J (Engl) 2020 May 5; 133(9): 1032-1038. doi: 10.1097/CM9.0000000000000775. /Viewed 1st Oct,2022

2)b Smoking history is the greatest aggravating factor for COVID-19 pneumonia

[http://www.jstc.or.jp/modules/information/index.php?content\\_id=246](http://www.jstc.or.jp/modules/information/index.php?content_id=246)

3) Smoking is the worst: risk of severe symptoms of novel coronavirus during the Delta and Omicron epidemics

<http://www.jstc.or.jp/uploads/uploads/files/essay/220120corona.pdf>

4) 1. Smokers lose immunity from the novel coronavirus vaccine faster 2. Efficacy of inoculation for people who are infected with the novel coronavirus: smokers have about 40% fewer neutralizing antibodies than non-smokers

<http://www.jstc.or.jp/uploads/uploads/files/information/221026corona.pdf>

5) Even after receiving a vaccine, smokers can not develop sufficient immunity.

[http://www.jstc.or.jp/modules/information/index.php?content\\_id=295](http://www.jstc.or.jp/modules/information/index.php?content_id=295)

6) Buonsenso D, Gualano MR, Rossi MF, et al. Post-Acute COVID-19 Sequelae in a Working Population at One Year Follow-Up: A Wide Range of Impacts from an Italian Sample. Int J Environ Res Public Health. 2022; 19(17): 11093. Published 2022 Sep 5. doi:10.3390/ijerph191711093

7) Paul E, Fancourt D. Health behaviours the month prior to COVID-19 infection and the development of self-reported long COVID and specific long COVID symptoms: a

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<https://doi.org/10.1186/s12889-022-14123-7/> Viewed 1st Oct, 2022

8) Li Z, He J, Wang Y, et al. A cross-sectional study on the mental health of patients with COVID-19 1 year after discharge in Huanggang, China [published online ahead of print, 2022 Oct 3]. Eur Arch Psychiatry Clin Neurosci. 2022; 10.1007/s00406-022-01484-8.

doi: 10.1007/s00406-022-01484-8

9) Smokers take longer to recover from long corona

<http://www.jstc.or.jp/uploads/uploads/files/information/221123c.pdf>