

General Practitioner's Section

Side Effects Of Advice Of "Stop Smoking"

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Smoking is definitely the cause of ischaemic heart disease. Unlike cholesterol there is no difference of opinion on smoking. Thus every smoker who comes to your clinic should be advised to stop smoking completely and permanently.

However the family physician must prepare the patient for short term and long term side effects of stopping smoking. The short term effect is increase in weight. The long term effects are increase in obesity then the side effects like that of metabolic syndrome. The patient can thus develop hyperglycaemia and hypercholesterolaemia with high BP, for all of which he is going to blame the family

doctor.

However it is very important to warn the patient that once he stops smoking which is a must, he should immediately start a low calorie diet, although his appetite increases markedly. He should avoid eating rice and take less chapattis and bread but increase the quantity of vegetables and the number of vegetables at each sitting. Add salads, fresh fruits, eggs, chicken and drink 3-4 litres of water per day. Also regular morning walking habit should be established.

Thus theoretically in the long term this patient may be slightly more prone to coronary artery disease. But a very high risk of getting myocardial infarction due to smoking is definitely a very high risk which has to be removed at any cost, by stopping smoking.

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