The Tobacco Epidemic

2nd, revised and extended edition

Volume Editors

Robert Loddenkemper  Berlin
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85 figures, 31 in color, 29 tables, 2015
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Tobacco entered America long before the Europeans arrived. A Spanish crew member of the Santa Maria, the flagship of Christopher Columbus’s first expedition, is credited with being the first European smoker. In Japan, tobacco was introduced by Portuguese sailors in the middle of the 16th century. In Australia, smoking started when it was introduced to northern-dwelling communities by visiting Indonesian fishermen in the early 18th century.

The world was conquered by tobacco and the disaster started.

The 42nd volume of Progress in Respiratory Research presents an updated edition of this topic. In this revised and extended version, all actual aspects of the epidemic are covered. In 23 chapters, the complete tobacco story is considered, starting with its history and ending with an emerging problem: electronic cigarettes.

The editors were able to motivate the ‘who is who’ in the field, and, true to the heart of the series, the book concentrated on an ongoing problem in the world, and all authors included the latest relevant references.

My congratulations to the editors and the authors for this great volume.

Enjoy reading

Felix J.F. Herth, Heidelberg
Preface

Tobacco use causes one of the world’s deadliest epidemics ever. It killed 100 million people in the 20th century and, if trends do not change, will be responsible for the deaths of 1 billion people in this century. Most of those projected deaths will occur in low- and middle-income countries, where the tobacco industry has shifted its efforts to recruit new smokers (Framework Convention Alliance, Moscow, October 13–18, 2014).

In 1997, our friend Chris Bolliger – who sadly died in 2012 – wrote in his preface to the 1st volume of the book series Progress in Respiratory Research under his editorship: ‘For this first volume “The Tobacco Epidemic” to appear under my editorship I have chosen the area of smoking, which is more than just “timely” considering the current legal developments on everything concerning smoking in the USA. It further represents a topic which should appeal to a large readership across many medical specialities, but also to non-medical people interested in tobacco’.

We, the editors of this 2nd edition of ‘The Tobacco Epidemic’, have to acknowledge the progress meanwhile achieved in many areas against this deadly tobacco epidemic; however, as outlined in several chapters, recent data show that the global problem has even been aggravated since 1997.

In their foreword to the book the two editors Chris Bolliger and Karl Olov Fagerström stated: ‘In the summer of 1997, American tobacco companies were pushed against the wall and agreed to: (a) pay well over USD 300 billion to smokers and health care givers; (b) restrict their marketing, and (c) make sure that smoking in adolescence declines’. The contributions in this 2015 edition reveal that this has not been implemented; on the contrary, the predictions of the former editors have unfortunately come true: ‘The tobacco industry is now likely to be “rolled back” on other fronts, too. Actions are now also mounting in Europe. Cigarette smoking will most likely not be exempt from regulations as in the past. However, smoking may still grow in the developing world and make up for the sales lost in the USA and other developed countries’.

However, in the past 18 years, some essential progress has been made in the fight against the deadly epidemic, the most important being certainly the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control, approved in 2006, which changed the landscape of public health being one of the most widely adopted treaties in the history of the United Nations, with 179 Parties to the Convention covering over 85% of the world’s population. This was followed in 2008 by the introduction of six WHO MPOWER measures, a policy package intended to assist implementation of effective interventions to reduce tobacco use worldwide at the country level. The first Tobacco Atlas was released in 2002 and the editors of the 4th edition in 2012 stated rightly that the last 10 years had likely been the most productive period in the history of tobacco control, but that far too much remains to be done. The regular US Surgeon General’s Reports – last year under the heading The Health Consequences of Smoking – 50 Years of Progress – helped essentially to raise the awareness about the dangers related to tobacco and its industry. In several countries, strict regulations with smoking bans were introduced, ‘smoke free’ – the first complete ban on workplace smoking – in Ireland in 2004. Seventeen European Union (EU) countries have introduced comprehensive laws since then and more than 60 countries worldwide and 28 US states have comprehensive smoke-free laws. In the EU, the first Tobacco Product Directive of 2001 was comprehensively revised in 2014, thus strengthening the
rules on how tobacco products are manufactured, produced and presented in the EU and introducing specific rules for certain tobacco-related products.

The scientific knowledge on the health hazards of tobacco – almost all organs of the body are now found to be affected – and on nicotine addiction has enlarged considerably since the 1st edition. This 2nd edition with its 23 chapters written by outstanding experts covers all clinical, public health and political aspects on tobacco smoking. The book is illustrated with 85 figures and 29 tables and contains a broad range of the most recent literature. The reader can learn about the long history of tobacco production and use, about the economical aspects of tobacco use and control as well as the health consequences of voluntary and involuntary smoking, both in adults and in children. Special chapters depict the impact of media, movies and TV on tobacco use in the youth, the most relevant target of the cigarette industry. The patterns and predictors of smoking cessation in the general population as well as in different social subgroups are described. The reader will further be updated on the development and features of nicotine dependence, how it can be treated with nicotine replacement medications and other drugs, the role of general practitioners, nurses and pharmacists in aiding smokers to quit, what effects smoke-free environments, advertising bans and price increases have on smoking prevalence, and, of course, what smoking prevalence looks like worldwide. Besides chapters on smokeless and waterpipe tobacco smoking, the final chapter analyses the potential harms and benefits of e-cigarettes and other electronic nicotine-delivering devices, a topic which has recently achieved high public attention and which – on one side – may help smokers to quit but entails – on the other side – the danger of renormalization of smoking, in particular appealing to the youth.

We are convinced that the request of Chris Bolliger that 'individual contributions should be a mix of highly scientific but also easy-to-read writing...' has been fulfilled in this extended and completely revised 2nd edition. We are grateful to all authors representing so many countries and organisations for their dedicated contributions. We hope that this book will be helpful not only to medical doctors, medical trainees and nurses from various fields who witness the burden of smoking-related diseases in their daily practice (e.g. public health, respiratory medicine, thoracic surgery, cardiology, internal medicine, paediatric medicine, psychiatry, psychology, occupational medicine and obstetrics) but also to interested journalists and politicians/legislators.

As an outlook to a potential 3rd edition, we express the hope that the fight against the tobacco epidemic will move on successfully to stop the epidemic and that this 2nd edition will contribute to the success and assist those engaged in this fight.

Robert Loddenkemper, Berlin
Michael Kreuter, Heidelberg