

World No Tobacco Day — May 31, 2014

The global tobacco epidemic contributed to 100 million deaths worldwide during the 20th century and continues to kill nearly 6 million persons each year, including approximately 600,000 from secondhand smoke. If current trends persist, an estimated 500 million persons alive today will die from the use of tobacco products. By 2030, tobacco use will result in approximately 8 million deaths worldwide each year. About 80% of these preventable deaths will occur in low- and middle-income countries (1,2).

Sponsored by the World Health Organization and observed worldwide on May 31 each year, World No Tobacco Day highlights the health risks of tobacco use and promotes effective actions to reduce tobacco consumption. This year, World No Tobacco Day calls on countries to raise taxes on tobacco (2).

Increasing the price of tobacco products by raising tobacco taxes is one of the most powerful and cost-effective means to prevent and reduce tobacco use, but it is an underused strategy (3,4). Research shows that higher taxes can reduce the relative affordability of tobacco products, encourage smokers to quit, reduce cigarette consumption, and discourage young persons from smoking initiation. It also generates government revenues, which can be invested in effective tobacco control efforts that will further reduce tobacco use (3,4).

References

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Cigarette Prices and Smoking Prevalence After a Tobacco Tax Increase — Turkey, 2008 and 2012

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Raising the price of tobacco products has been shown to reduce tobacco consumption in the United States and other high-income countries, and evidence of this impact has been growing for low- and middle-income countries as well (1,2). Turkey is a middle-income country surveyed by the Global Adult Tobacco Survey (GATS) twice in a 4-year period, in 2008 and 2012. During this time, the country introduced a policy raising its Special Consumption Tax on Tobacco and implemented a comprehensive tobacco control program banning smoking in public places, banning advertising, and introducing graphic health warnings. The higher tobacco tax took effect in early 2010, allowing sufficient time for subsequent changes in prices and smoking to be observed by the time of the 2012 GATS. This report uses data from GATS Turkey to examine how cigarette prices changed after the 2010 tax increase, describe the temporally associated changes in smoking

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