

[IMAGE]

## Smoking Linked to Back Pain in Children

Even if you've been confined to a deserted island for 50 years, you're no doubt aware of the dangers of smoking. Overwhelming evidence links smoking to terminal diseases (including lung cancer and emphysema) and the risk of premature death. That evidence includes several recent studies mentioned in this publication. (See "Long-Term Smoking Linked to Arthritis," Oct. 1999, and "Cigars Just as Dangerous as Cigarettes," Dec. 1999.)

Smoking may also influence back pain, a suggestion again supported by recent evidence (See "Another Reason Not to Smoke," Aug. 1999) and a study that appeared in the December 1st issue of *Spine*. Students from three high schools in Montreal, Canada were monitored for one year to evaluate the incidence of low back pain (LBP) and its potential association with smoking.

Back pain (pain occurring at least once a week in the previous six months) was twice as likely in smokers than nonsmokers. Additionally, moderate-to-heavy smokers (25 or more cigarettes per week) experienced more pain than light-to-moderate smokers (1-25 cigarettes per week).

Far too many people suffer from low back pain, and far too many people continue to smoke despite the warnings. With increasing numbers of our children smoking and suffering from back pain, isn't it time to lead ourselves and our children down a healthier path?

### *Reference:*

Feldman DE, Rossignol M, Shrier I, et al. Smoking: a risk factor for the development of low back pain in adolescents. *Spine*, Dec. 1, 1999: Vol. 24, No. 3, pp2492-96.

For more information on childhood conditions, go to <http://www.chiroweb.com/tyh/childhood.html>

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