



Tobacco use down by 'paltry' 2.55% in 10 yrs: Lancet

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Global efforts to control use of tobacco have led to a decline in prevalence of smoking, according to the latest paper published in international medical journal

The Lancet. The mean smoking prevalence across the world, has decreased by “a paltry” 2.55 per cent. “While in 2005, the prevalence was 24.73 per cent, it has reduced to 22.18 per cent in 2015,” states the paper. Smoking prevalence means number of persons smoking tobacco in a particular population.

The research paper monitored progress of 126 countries, whose data was made available, of the 180 countries, who have ratified the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC).

Commenting on paltry decrease of smoking prevalence, the paper says, “Though the progress of WHO FCTC ratification has been remarkable (179 countries and the European Union, covering nearly 90 per cent of the world’s population), implementation of the treaty has been slow and has not always been at the highest level.”

The paper states, “By 2014, only a fifth of countries (28 of 126) in the study sample had implemented tax measures at the highest level. This is disconcerting because raising tobacco taxes to increase prices is the most effective means of reducing tobacco use, especially in low-income and middle-income countries where smokers are more price-sensitive.”

**Dr PC Gupta, director, Healix Sekhsaria Foundation** pointed out that while in some countries including India, Brazil, and industrialised countries like UK, Germany, USA, Australia among others, the smoking prevalence has reduced, in other low-income countries it has increased. countries it has increased.

FCTC PARAMETERS ANALYSED BY THE PAPER

**Article 6:** Raise taxes on tobacco

**Article 8:** Protect people from tobacco smoke

**Articles 11 and 12:** Warn about the dangers of tobacco

**Article 13:** Enforce bans on tobacco advertising, promotion, and sponsorship

**Article 14:** Offer help to quit tobacco use

**Article 20:** Monitor tobacco use to understand if stronger implementation can lead to decrease in smoking