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# MEDICINA CLINICA



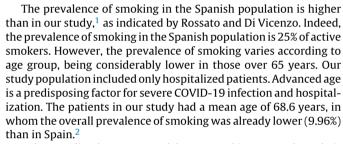
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## Letter to the Editor

#### Reply

# Respuesta

Dear Editor:



Other studies have reported lower smoking rates than their respective populations. The low prevalence reported among COVID patients may be due to an underestimation of smoking. Data collection conditions in overwhelmed health systems are particularly difficult.<sup>3</sup> As indicated in the discussion section, this is a retrospective study and is limited in the respect that a complete smoking history (time of smoking cessation, degree of exposure, . . .) was not available.<sup>1</sup>

We should pay attention to the scientific messages about smoking and COVID-19. Nowadays, there is no solid evidence that smoking has a protective effect against COVID-19. Our study is based on 14,260 patients and the conclusions are supported by the

results. The low prevalence of current smoking in our study cannot be considered a "protective" factor. We did not analyze the risk of infection or hospitalization based on smoking or non-smoking. We studied the severity of patients once admitted based on smoking history. A study of patients with COVID-19 infection could be considered to analyze the risk of admission according to smoking history. In any case, our analysis shows that among smokers the risk of disease progression is significantly higher. 1

## References

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- 3. Patanavanich R, Glantz SA. Smoking is associated with COVID-19 progression: a meta-analysis. Nicotine Tob Res. 2020;22:1653-6, http://dx.doi.org/10.1093/ntr/ntaa082.

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