

Review report

Final title: **Relation of smoking behaviour with severity of COVID-19 infections in a sample of Iraqi patients**

Title at submission: The relation of (Covid-19) infection to the severity of respiratory symptyom in smokes in a sample of Iraqi Patients.

Submission date: 20 Nov 2024

Revised submission 23-Dec-24

Accepted: 10-Jan-25

Reviewer C: S M Rashed Ul Islam, ORCID: [0000-0002-8164-5905](https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8164-5905)

<b>Overview</b> The article is based on the relationship between smoking status and the severity of COVID-19 symptoms among Iraqi patients.	
1. <b>Comment</b>	Line 30: The number of patients should not be mentioned here. Include this in the method, and this sentence needs rephrasing. Result: write cases of COVID-19 infection, like milder cases of COVID-19- symptoms and so on. Conclusion: The role of nicotine has not been seen. Instead, it has been hypothesized. Consider revising.
<b>Response</b>	Line 30: mentioned the number of patients.
2. <b>Comment</b>	Line 74: Provide any previous reference for this 7-point survey relevant to this. Line 93: How the mild and heavy smoker statuses have been categorized? Line 73: mentions sample calculation criteria..... This data collection and exclusion criteria can be formatted in a descriptive manner Line 102 to 108: Please omit from here and describe in no. 4 under the symptom severity.
<b>Response</b>	Line 74: reference provided, Line 93: revised, Line 73: and Line 102 to 108: revised.
3. <b>Comment</b>	Table 1: change the legend to Characteristic of the study population Figure 1. Please arrange this figure as 1a, 1b, and 1c and place the legend accordingly It is better to provide the percentage on the y-axis. Line 129, remove this line.
<b>Response</b>	Line 129: removed
4. <b>Comment</b>	Line 152 to 155: This statement from this reference may be removed, but you can include a reference from any article from a reputed journal This study did not explore nicotine's biological or molecular effects, changes in the respiratory epithelium, or respiratory infection. Some hypotheses may be included in the discussion section on how nicotine may be beneficial... Most results lack statistical significance (p-values > 0.05). So, a discussion needs some potential reasons for such a response in the study result. Study limitation: These points may be added to this section. No nicotine effect could be seen. Asymmetric data, gender, age category, and self-reported data might be biased. Due to the cross-sectional effect, this study did not provide any long-term effect.
<b>Response</b>	Line 152 to 155: Reference has been removed, and revised. Study limitation also revised.
5. <b>Comment</b>	The conclusion needs some revision, highlighting the study's objectives and leading to the interpretation of the results. The effect of nicotine was not the objective of this study. A sentence may be added to mention the recommendation for policymakers regarding smoking habits and respiratory infection prevention.
<b>Response</b>	The conclusion revised
6. <b>Comment</b>	Reference: in text, format the reference and number in superscript after a full stop. Please follow the journal referencing style. Ref; 10. Format accordingly Ref 18, format accordingly
<b>Response</b>	References has been corrected

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7. <b>Comment</b>	1. Add an email to the corresponding author. 2. Highlight: Please provide 3 or 4 sentences emphasizing the keyword mentioned in this section. Introduction: 3. Line 52, Severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS CoV 2). Line 55: elaborate on COVID-19, then use short form afterward.
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	<p>4. Provide more global context for how smoking (and its different categories) has been linked to respiratory infections Result:</p> <p>5. Line 115: remove this: According to the statistical analysis. Line 129, remove this line.</p>
Response	<p>1. Email added</p> <p>2. Highlights added</p> <p>3. Elaborated at the beginning</p> <p>4. Added global context</p> <p>5. Removed</p> <p>6. Removed</p>
Editor's decision: <b>Revisions Required</b>	

ROUND 2

Comments sent to author: 24-Dec-24, Author response: 24-Dec -24

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8.	<p><b>Comment</b> We shall consider it as a Research Letter (No abstract, 750 words main text, one table or figure, ten references).</p> <p><b>Response</b> <p>1. I agree to the editorial's decision to consider it as research letter</p> <p>2. The revision of the manuscript to research letter is complete and attached to this message.</p> </p>
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ROUND 3

Comments sent to author: 31-Dec-24, Author response: 1-Jan -25

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9.	<p><b>Comment</b> Please arrange the main body into paragraphs for introduction, methods, results and discussion without section headings.</p> <p><b>Response</b> The main body has been revised as per editors comments.</p> <p><b>Comment</b> Change the highlight to the key message because of changes in the journal's style from Jan 2025. Write a key message in two or three sentences.</p> <p><b>Response</b> I have the changed highlights in the journal's style.</p> <p><b>Comment</b> Your findings are not correctly described. There is no significant association of smoking, frequency and method of smoking. Your description and conclusion are just the opposite to it.</p> <p><b>Response</b> Revised</p> <p><b>Comment</b> Smoking frequency should be categorised as daily and non-daily;</p> <p><b>Response</b> Revised</p> <p><b>Comment</b> The table should also have data for age and sex.</p> <p><b>Response</b> Revised data of table</p>
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