

Smoking is a serious problem for all of society. Smoking by healthcare workers, in particular, is an even more serious problem as it affects those who are responsible for helping others quit smoking and for educating the general population regarding the consequences of smoking. It is generally accepted that if a person cannot cope with their own problems, they will have difficulties helping others cope with similar problems. This is equally true for nicotine addiction. Why do so many nurses smoke? It is not logical for nurses, smoke more than other professional groups (39% of 337 respondents) and women (about 25%). At the time of the study (2005) 75% of nurses' who smoked, smoked while at work; managers tolerated this behavior and sometimes even smoked with the nurses. This is alarming since it presents a problem of professional ethics. Occasional smokers state that, while at work, they most often have a cigarette with a cup of coffee. Most smokers report that they smoke mainly in the company of others (62.5%). Half of smokers associate smoking with drinking coffee, they also claim that smoking relaxes them (44.5%) and helps them deal with stressful situations at work. Most nurses who smoke show signs of social nicotine addiction.

It has been shown that current smokers started experimenting with cigarettes as teenagers (76%), and their habit has become persistent and long-term. Additionally, the environment of healthcare facilities tends to reinforce psychological stressors that make it more difficult for nurses to break the smoking habit.