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Gender susceptibility for cigarette smoking-attributable lung cancer: A systematic review and meta-analysis

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ABSTRACT

Objectives: As the primary cause of lung cancer, whether smoking confers the same risk of lung cancer for women as men is unclear. Therefore, we aimed to compare male and female susceptibility for cigarette smoking-attributable lung cancer.

Methods: A systematic review and meta-analysis was conducted by searching articles published up to July 2013 in three online databases (MEDLINE, EMBASE, and Cochrane Database). All studies estimated the association of cigarette smoking with the risk of lung cancer between men and women, respectively. A random effects model with inverse variance weighting was used to pool data. Male to female ratio of relative risk (RRR) was calculated to compare male and female susceptibility for cigarette smoking-attributable lung cancer.

Results: 47 articles containing 404,874 individuals were included in the final analysis. Compared with nonsmokers, male to female RRR was 1.61 (95%CI: 1.37, 1.89) among current smokers. Based on pathological type, adenocarcinoma had the highest RRR (1.42; 95%CI: 0.86, 2.35), followed by squamous cancer and small cell lung cancer. Furthermore, compared with non-smoking men, current smoking men had higher risk of lung cancer than women in spite of smoking quantity, smoking duration or years since quitting. *Conclusions:* These findings indicated that males had higher susceptibility for cigarette smokingattributable lung cancer than females. It is contradicted with traditional opinion that females would be more easily suffered from cigarette smoking-attributable health problems than males. Hence, tobacco control is very crucial in both males and females.

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1. Introduction

Epidemiological evidence indicates that globally one billion men and 250 million women smoke every day [1]. Up to half of tobacco users will die from a tobacco-related disease. Cigarette smoking is one of the main causes of lung cancer. Till now, lung cancer is the leading cause of cancer morbidity and mortality worldwide, with almost 1.6 million new cases of lung cancer per year (13% of total cancer morbidity) and 1.4 million deaths per year (18% of total cancer mortality) [2].

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Thun et al. [3] analyzed seven US population surveys and found that relative risk for lung cancer death among male smokers was almost five times as high as that among female smokers in the 1959-1965 cohort. But in the 2000-2010 cohort, the risk of death causing by smoking-attributable lung cancer had equalized in men and women, in spite of worldwide lung cancer incidence has been decreasing or leveling off among men, rising among women [4]. These give rise to an assumption that there is gender difference in association of tobacco smoking with lung cancer risk. Furthermore, in the end of 20th century, Prescott and colleagues [5] reported that women who smoked had a 50% greater coronary heart disease risk than their male counterparts, and then concluded that women might be more sensitive than men to some harmful effects of smoking. Huxley and Woodward [6] found that smoking women had a higher risk of coronary heart disease than smoking men (RRR: 1.25, 95%CI: 1.12, 1.39). However, the epidemiologic data about lung





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Table 1Characteristics of included studies.

Study	Design (control type) ^a	Country	Participants (% male)	Mean age or age range (years)	Male current smoker (%)	Female current smoker (%)	Male former smoker (%)	Female former smoker (%)	Quality ^b
Akiba [21] Becher [38]	Cohort Case-Control (PB+HB)	Japan Germany	61,505 582(75.3)	NA Cases: male: 38-83, female: 40-85	64.0 50.9	12.6 41.0	19.9 36.1	2.7 16.0	6 6
Blizzard [12]	Case–Control	Australia	530(53.2)	33–55	37.6	31.9	36.5	27.4	8
Bracci [48]	(PB) Case–Control	USA	2374(47.1)	Cases: 69.8	11.7	7.7	47.9	27.9	7
Chan [27]	(PB) Case-Control	China	790(52.2)	NA	89.1	41.0	NA	NA	6
Chan-Yeung [28]	(HB) Case-Control (HB)	China	662(64.0)	Cases: male: 57.5, female: 56.0 Controls: male: 57.4 female: 55.9	65.1	8.0	NA	NA	5
Darby [39]	Case-Control	England	2324(65.6)	<75	34.4	35.6	52.6	29.6	6
De Matteis [4]	Case–Control	Italy	4059(77.7)	35–79	38.2	32.5	48.3	25.0	8
Doll [40]	Case–Control	England	2930(92.6)	25-74	97.5	54.2	NA	NA	4
Franco-Marina [56]	Case–Control	Mexico	1283(63.2)	47–102	38.5	14.6	34.5	12.1	7
Gao [29]	(PB) Case-Control (PB)	China	2900(51.5)	Cases: male: 35–64, female 35–69	82.3	26.1	NA	NA	8
Harris [8]	Case–Control	USA	8582(64.2)	<79	43.9	45.5	43.4	21.4	8
Hosseini [30]	(HB) Case-Control (HB)	Iran	726(73.6)	Cases: 59.9 Hospital controls: 59.5; healthy	63.3	41.7	9.7	9.4	5
Hu [31]	Case-Control	China	454(70.9)	Male: 53.2; female:	66.5	35.5	NA	NA	6
Hu [32]	Case–Control	China	582(74.7)	NA	61.8	23.8	NA	NA	6
Humble [49]	Case–Control	USA	1290(65.5)	25-84	NA	NA	NA	NA	5
Hebert [11]	Case–Control	USA	4337(58.4)	NA	62.8	46.6	NA	NA	7
Jedrychowski [41]	(PB) (PB)	Poland	2172(81.8)	Cases: male: 63.3, female: 65.3 Controls: male: 66.8 female: 76.1	81.8	37.1	NA	NA	5
Jockel [42]	Case-Control	Germany	582(76.0)	38-87	87.0	59.4	NA	NA	4
Jockel [43]	Case–Control	Germany	1939(84.3)	33–80	90.5	50.5	NA	NA	8
Joly [58]	Case–Control	Cuba	2115(70.5)	Cases: 23-89	84.6	46.3	NA	NA	4
Kreienbrock [44]	Case–Control	Germany	3746(82.2)	Cases: male: 61,	85.2	50.2	NA	NA	7
Kreuzer [9]	Case-Control	German,	9792(79.6)	<74	48.0	35.5	37.6	14.3	6
Lei [33]	(PB+HB) Case–Control	China	1384(70.0)	NA	83.1	44.2	NA	NA	4
Liu [23]	(HB) Case-Control	China	7112(57.9)	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	6
Lubi [50]	(PB) Case-Control (HB)	USA	23,008 (88.6)	Cases: male: 60.8, female: 60.7 Controls: male:	86.4	42.1	NA	NA	5
Maclennan [34]	Case-Control	Singapore	533(52.7)	60.2, temale: 60.6 NA	92.9	40.7	NA	NA	6
Minami [35]	(HB) Case-Control	Japan	2959(82.6)	>40	52.7	11.8	26.6	3.0	6
Muscat [51]	(HB) Case-Control	USA	4745(58.5)	NA	25.7	24.0	43.7	25.3	6
Mzileni [59]	(HB) Case-Control (HB)	South Africa	728(64.7)	Cases: male: 58.6, female: 57.8 Controls: male: 60.9 female: 48.6	82.3	40.0	5.9	6.7	5
Nordlund [20]	Cohort	Sweden	41,710(38.1)	18–69	14.9	16.2	8.5	3.4	8

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