Prevalence of second-hand smoke exposure after introduction of the Italian smoking ban: the Florence and Belluno survey

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ABSTRACT

Aims and background. A law banning smoking in enclosed public places was implemented in Italy on January 10, 2005. The aim of this paper is to present a cross-sectional survey on two representative samples of non-smokers of two Italian towns (Florence and Belluno), conducted one year after the introduction of the ban, in order to assess prevalence of second-hand smoke exposure, to record the attitudes towards the ban, and the perception about its compliance in a representative sample of non-smokers.

Methods. Computer-assisted telephone interviews were carried out in March 2006, from a random sample of households from telephone registries. Respondents were 402 non-smokers from Belluno and 1,073 from Florence.

Results. About 12% of Florentines and 7% of Belluno respondents were exposed at home; 39% and 19%, respectively, at work; 10% and 5% in hospitality venues; 20% and 10% in cars. The smoke-free law was almost universally supported (about 98%) even if a smaller proportion of people (about 90%) had the perception that the ban was observed.

Conclusions. Second-hand smoke exposure at home and in hospitality premises has dropped to ≤10%, whereas exposure at work remained higher. These results suggest the need for more controls in workplaces other than hospitality venues.

Key words: Italy, second-hand smoke, smoking ban, survey.


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