

# *Two people die every hour from active smoking in Cuba*

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**WHO photo**

Havana, May 31 (RHC)—On World No Tobacco Day, Cuban media informs the public of the dangers of addiction to this drug.

According to results of a National Health Survey, one in five Cubans aged 15 and over currently smokes on the island, which is 21.6% of its population, which represents 2 014 460 Cubans.

Cubadebate website disclosed Monday the results of a survey carried out in all provinces and selected municipalities in urban and rural areas, which concluded in December 2019.

It constitutes a nationally representative study by geographic areas, sex, and age groups.

"It is the most updated information at the country level before the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic," said Dr. Patricia Varona Pérez, epidemiologist and researcher at the National Institute of Hygiene, Epidemiology, and Microbiology (INHEM).

The specialist said that the research had a broad thematic scope and "of course, smoking was one of the elements with the highest priority, since it is a chronic systemic addictive disease, given its relationship with

the main causes of mortality and morbidity in the country: non-communicable diseases are responsible for 80% of all annual deaths and one-third of premature mortality."

The statistics are clear enough, said Varona Pérez. Smoking kills more than 13,000 people in Cuba every year, 36 Cubans die every day, and two die every hour from active smoking. As a consequence of passive smoking, every 24 hours, four non-smokers aged 35 and over die in the country from associated diseases alone, such as ischemic heart disease and lung cancer.

According to the WHO, every year, 8 million people die due to smoking. The organization's member States created World No Tobacco Day in 1987 to draw global attention to the tobacco epidemic and the preventable death and disease it causes.

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