



Want to quit? Don't go to light smokes

WASHINGTON (Reuters) — Smokers who switch to a low-tar, light or mild brand of cigarette will not find it easier to quit and in fact may find it harder, researchers reported on Tuesday.

They found that smokers who traded to light cigarettes were 50 percent less likely to kick the habit.

"It may be that smokers think that a lighter brand is better for their health and is therefore an acceptable alternative to giving up completely," Dr. Hilary Tindle of the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine, who led the study, said in a statement.

Her study of 31,000 smokers found that 12,000, or 38 percent, had switched to a lighter brand.

A quarter said they switched because of flavor but nearly 20 percent said they had switched for a combination of better flavor, wanting to smoke a less harmful cigarette, and as part of an effort to give up smoking completely, Tindle's team reported in the journal *Tobacco Control*.

Those who switched brands were 58 percent more likely to have tried to quit smoking between 2002 and 2003 than those who stuck with their brand. But they were 60 percent less likely to actually succeed in quitting, Tindle's team found.

"Forty-three percent of smokers reported a desire to quit smoking as a reason for switching to lighter cigarettes. While these individuals were the most likely to make an attempt, ironically, they were the least likely to quit smoking," Tindle said.

Other research has shown that so-called low-tar cigarettes have just as much tar, nicotine and other compounds as regular cigarettes, making them .

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration was given the power to regulate cigarettes in June and was immediately sued by companies such as Reynolds American Inc and Lorillard Inc. Altria Group Inc's Philip Morris unit, the nation's largest tobacco company, supports FDA oversight.

Scared of flying? Press the fear

iButton

SYDNEY (Reuters) — People scared of flying can now press a button on their iPhone to help them deal with their panic.

Long-haul airline Virgin Atlantic Airways has launched an application, or app, for its Flying Without Fear course which boasts a success rate of over 98 percent. Apps are a source of information, games and other novelty ideas for users of Apple's iPhone and iPod Touch devices.

The airline said in a statement that this app was designed to help people overcome fear, be it of the unfamiliar aircraft, the strange noises a plane makes, or of losing control.

"Our first iPhone app will bring the benefits of our successful Flying Without Fear course to millions of people around the world who are now using mobile technology to make their lives better," Richard Branson, president of Virgin Atlantic, said in a statement.

"The app will put many travelers at ease and enable them to prepare for their first Virgin Atlantic flight."

The airline developed the app with Mental Workout, a company developing software to help people resolve issues and increase mental performance. A spokesman from Mental Workout said an estimated one in every three adults were scared of flying.

Teach time management: The key to success

Every busy parent, wishing for more than 24 hours in the day, has tried to come up with ways to make more efficient use of their time. By establishing efficient routines and reasonable schedules in your home, you have the ability to do just that. You might even find yourself with enough time to plan fun extra activities to do with your family. Rhona M. Gordon, a speech pathologist, organizational specialist and author of *Thinking Organized for Parents and Children*, has these tips for parents to try:

Start early! To save time, everything in your house should have a designated place, including: back packs, lunch boxes, coats etc...Start practicing over the summer by having children put the items they use daily, such as swim bags or sports equipment, in a pre-arranged spot. It sounds simple, but it is true— it's easier to find something if that item has a home.

Set up a monthly calendar with each child. Begin by listing holidays and birthdays.

Use your school district's global calendar to add school vacation days, exams or other testing dates and any other important events. When school begins, help



your child expand the calendar with a color coding system: red for tests or quizzes, blue for long-term projects, black for nightly homework and green for fun activities. Being able to see activities for an entire month helps children plan and organize time more effectively.

Practice estimating time with activities such as a family dinner or sports practice. Begin by

practicing this skill with everyday activities over the summer, and then encourage your child to use the same strategy with his or her homework. By recognizing the actual amount of time necessary for schoolwork, chores and fun activities, your child gains an awareness of the passage of time and the importance of managing

time efficiently.

Teach your child how to divide long term projects into manageable tasks. Once again, it is best to practice this strategy with fun activities over the summer, and then apply the skill to schoolwork in the fall. It is easy to combine this strategy with practicing how to estimate time accurately.

For example, have your child

list the steps associated with preparing a family dinner, such as choosing the menu, finding the ingredients, cooking the food, setting the table, eating, clearing the table and washing the dishes. After the activity is divided into specific tasks, your child can estimate the time each step will take and compare this to the actual time. Learning how to divide large projects helps students initiate and complete daunting academic assignments by breaking the large task into manageable pieces.

Avoid procrastination. Some students cancel afternoon or weekend plans because of homework but still delay completing the work until the last minute. Teach your child to pair difficult or boring tasks with a reward by modeling. You can explain that you have been putting off cleaning that closet or junk drawer, but have decided to get it done and then reward yourself with a long bubble bath. Working from a "To Do" list helps both you and your child prioritize tasks and plan time effectively.

As children become more conscious of time, it is easier for them to succeed in school and extracurricular activities. Fortunately, time management skills can be learned. Parents can help students become aware of time every day: how it is spent, how it is wasted, how it is planned, and how quickly it passes. Practicing time management strategies will help your student become a better manager of time and ultimately benefit the whole family.

(Source: *education.com*)

Millions worldwide would like to switch countries: study

WASHINGTON (AFP) — Some 700 million people worldwide, or more than all the adults of North and South America combined, think the grass is greener on the other side of the fence and want to permanently move to another country, a poll showed Tuesday.

Residents of sub-Saharan African countries were the most likely to want to move abroad permanently, the polls conducted in 135 countries between 2007 and this year by Gallup showed.

On average, 38 percent of the adult population in sub-Saharan Africa, or around 165 million people, said they would up stakes and head for another country if they had the chance.



More than 2,700 people are sworn in as U.S. citizens during naturalization ceremonies in April 2009 in Montebello, California. Some 700 million people worldwide, or more than all the adults of North and South America combined, think the grass is greener on the other side of the fence and want to permanently move to another country, a poll showed Tuesday. (AFP/Getty Images/File/David Mcnevy)

The most popular destination was the United States, where nearly a quarter of the 700 million — around 165 million people — said they would like to settle.

In joint second were Britain, Canada and France, each being named as the preferred destination of around 45 million people. Thirty-five million said they would go to Spain, 30 million to Saudi Arabia, and 25 million each to Australia or Germany.

The least likely to want to emigrate were Asians — only one in 10 Asian adults said they would move to another country.

Nearly 260,000 people aged 15 years and older were surveyed, either by phone or face-to-face, for the poll, which has a margin of error of around five percent.

Thinking negatively can boost your memory

SYDNEY (Reuters Life!) — Bad moods can actually be good for you, with an Australian study finding that being sad make people less gullible, improves their ability to judge others and also boosts memory.

The study, authored by psychology professor Joseph Forgas at the University of New South Wales, showed that people in a negative mood were more critical of, and paid more attention to, their surroundings than happier people, who were more likely to believe anything they were told.

"Whereas positive mood seems to promote creativity, flexibility, cooperation, and reliance on mental shortcuts, negative moods trigger more attentive, careful thinking paying greater attention to the external world," Forgas wrote. "Our research suggests that sadness ... promotes information processing strategies best suited to dealing with more demanding situations."

For the study, Forgas and his team conducted several experiments that started with inducing happy or sad moods in their subjects through watching films and recalling positive or negative events.



An undated image of the human brain taken through scanning technology. University of California, Santa Barbara/Handout

actually promote a more concrete, accommodative and ultimately more successful communication style."

"Positive mood is not universally desirable: people in negative mood are less prone to judgmental errors, are more resistant to eye-witness distortions and are better at producing high-quality, effective persuasive messages," Forgas wrote.

The study was published in the November/December edition of the *Australasian Science* journal.

Pa. woman, daughter hold signs admitting theft

BEDFORD, Pa. (AP) — In exchange for no jail time, a woman and her adult daughter have agreed to stand outside a Pennsylvania courthouse holding signs saying they stole a gift card from a 9-year-old girl on her birthday.

Fifty-six-year-old Evelyn Border and 35-year-old Tina Griekspoor stood outside the court for 4 1/2 hours Tuesday.

They held signs that read: "I stole from a 9-year-old girl on

her birthday! Don't steal or this could happen to you!"

Because the women agreed to hold the signs, Bedford County District Attorney Bill Higgins says he'll ask for probation instead of jail when they plead guilty to the theft.

Higgins says they swiped a gift card that the girl set on a shelf while a Walmart employee helped her.

The girl's mother planned to drive by the courthouse to teach her daughter the importance of obeying the law.

Town makes it illegal to own more than 3 cats

DUDLEY, Mass. (AP) — It's now illegal in one Massachusetts town to own more than three cats without getting a special license. Voters at a town meeting in Dudley on Monday night added language to a town bylaw that makes it illegal to own more than three cats without a \$50 residential kennel license. Dudley is about 60 miles southwest of Boston.

The article was in response to a neighborhood feud over the 15 cats owned by Mary Ellen Richards.

The *Telegram & Gazette* of Worcester reports that one neighbor claimed the cats have ruined his yard.

Richards has put her home up for sale and says she plans to move to a "more cat-friendly community."



British parents in court over their baby's right to die

LONDON (AFP) — A seriously ill baby whose parents are locked in a legal battle about whether to keep him on the ventilator which allows him to breathe is living "on a knife edge", the High Court in London heard Tuesday.

The boy, known only as Baby RB, has a rare neuromuscular condition which severely limits his ability to breathe and move his limbs. He has been on a ventilator since he was born on October 10 last year.

His doctors, supported by his mother, want to switch off the ventilator to stop further suffering, saying he is facing a "miserable, sad and pitiful existence" even if surgery allows him to go home.

His father, who is separated from the mother, says the baby's brain is unaffected and insists he can see, hear, feel and recognize his parents.

The father has asked a specialist to assess whether he should receive treatment that might help him breathe on his own.

However, the doctor in charge of the baby's care, known as Dr. F, told the High Court Tuesday that the little boy was living "on a knife edge" and would not benefit from the procedure, a tracheotomy.

He said Baby RB would still be dependent on artificial ventilation if he had the procedure, which involves creating an opening in the neck to deliver air to the lungs, saying he was "at the most severe end of physical disability".

Another specialist is due to assess the little boy next weekend to see whether a tracheotomy would allow him to be taken off the ventilator and sent home.

Baby RB's mother, who like everyone else in the case has not been identified for legal reasons, issued a statement through her lawyer on Monday giving her reasons for calling for her baby to be allowed to die.

"RB's mother has sat by her son's bedside every day since he was born. Every day she has seen the pain he experiences just to survive," the statement said.

"In deciding to support this application, she has listened to and consulted with some of the best doctors in the world.

Their view has been unanimous. "In her mind, the intolerable suffering experienced by her son must outweigh her own personal grief should she lose her child."

Baby RB's parents are "amicably separated", the court was told. Both in their 20s, they were present in court of the proceedings on Monday as well as on Tuesday.