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**Most smokers don't know what's in cigarette**

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Jun 24, 2016, 08.18 AM IST

WASHINGTON: Do you know what's in your cigarette? A recent study suggests that most of you don't!

The research found that there is little awareness of the chemical components of cigarette smoke amongst the US adults, even though many of them report having looked for relevant information.

Researchers from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill suggest that the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) expand its messaging activities so that information about these constituents reaches all segments of the US population, especially those most vulnerable to tobacco product use and its associated health risks.

First author Marcella Boynton said that the majority of the U.S. public wants easy access to information about chemicals in cigarettes and other tobacco products. "Surprisingly, the results reveal that groups one might presume to be the least psychologically motivated to look for this information, young adults and smokers, were more likely to say that they had previously looked for this information."

27.5 percent adults reported having looked for information on the different components of tobacco products and tobacco smoke, many of which are known to be poisonous or cause cancer. Out of these adults, 37.2 percent were young adults and 34.3 percent were smokers.

Out of non-smokers and older adults, 26 percent reported having looked for information on tobacco constituents. However, with the exception of nicotine, most respondents were largely unaware of which constituents are present in cigarette smoke. Over half of respondents indicated that they would like relevant information to be available on cigarette packs, and 28.7 percent would prefer to access that information online.

These results indicate that publication of tobacco constituent information is of interest to the public and could improve public health in the US where tobacco use is the leading cause of preventable death and disease, the researchers suggest.

Boynton added that by making tobacco chemical information available to the public and tobacco industry practice more transparent, those seeking this information may be less likely to start smoking and more likely to quit because they will be better informed about the toxic chemicals present in tobacco products.

The research team conducted a nationally representative telephone survey among 5,014 US adults aged 18 years and over.

The study is published in the open access journal BMC Public Health.