



The importance of preventing tobacco consumption: Respiratory and cardiovascular diseases in smokers attending a psychological treatment for smoking cessation

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Introduction.

Smoking is the main preventable cause of morbidity and mortality in the world. We know that tobacco use is directly related to different and important diseases primarily of the respiratory and cardiovascular systems such as arterial and venous disease, lung cancer, laryngeal cancer, or chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, among others (Boyle, Gray, Henningfield, Seffrin, & Zatónski, 2010). If we avoid that young people start smoking and if we increase the availability of effective treatments for smoking cessation, we can help to reduce the mortality and illnesses caused by tobacco consumption.

Aim.

The aim of the present study was to determine the prevalence of different respiratory and cardiovascular diseases in smokers who seek psychological treatment for smoking cessation (years 2010-2012) at the Smoking Cessation Unit of the University of Santiago de Compostela (Spain).

Method.

The sample was made up of 285 smokers (39.6% men, 60.4% women) who seek psychological treatment (Becoña, 2007) for smoking cessation (years 2010-2012) at the Smoking Cessation Unit of the University of Santiago de Compostela (Spain). All the smokers were assessed with the Smoking Habit Questionnaire (Becoña & Lorenzo, 2004), which collects information on sociodemographic variables (gender, age), about smoking (number of cigarettes smoked pre-treatment), and physical diseases related to tobacco use that were suffered at that time or in the past.

Results.

Some of the most prevalence diseases are circulatory problems (31.2%), bronchitis (19.3%), asthma (9.8%), tuberculosis (3.9%), and myocardial infarction (1.8%) (see Figure 1). Regarding gender, it is more likely that female smokers, compared to male, present poor circulation (43% vs. 13.3%, $X^2 = 28.103$; $p < .001$), varicose veins (26.7% vs. 5.3%, $X^2 = 21.005$, $p < .001$), and migraines (33.1% vs. 22.1%, $X^2 = 4.038$; $p < .05$) (see Figure 2). According to the number of cigarettes smoked per day those who smoked more were more likely to have had bronchitis ($t = -2.511$; $p > .05$), and migraines ($t = -2.316$; $p > .05$).

Figure 1. Prevalence diseases

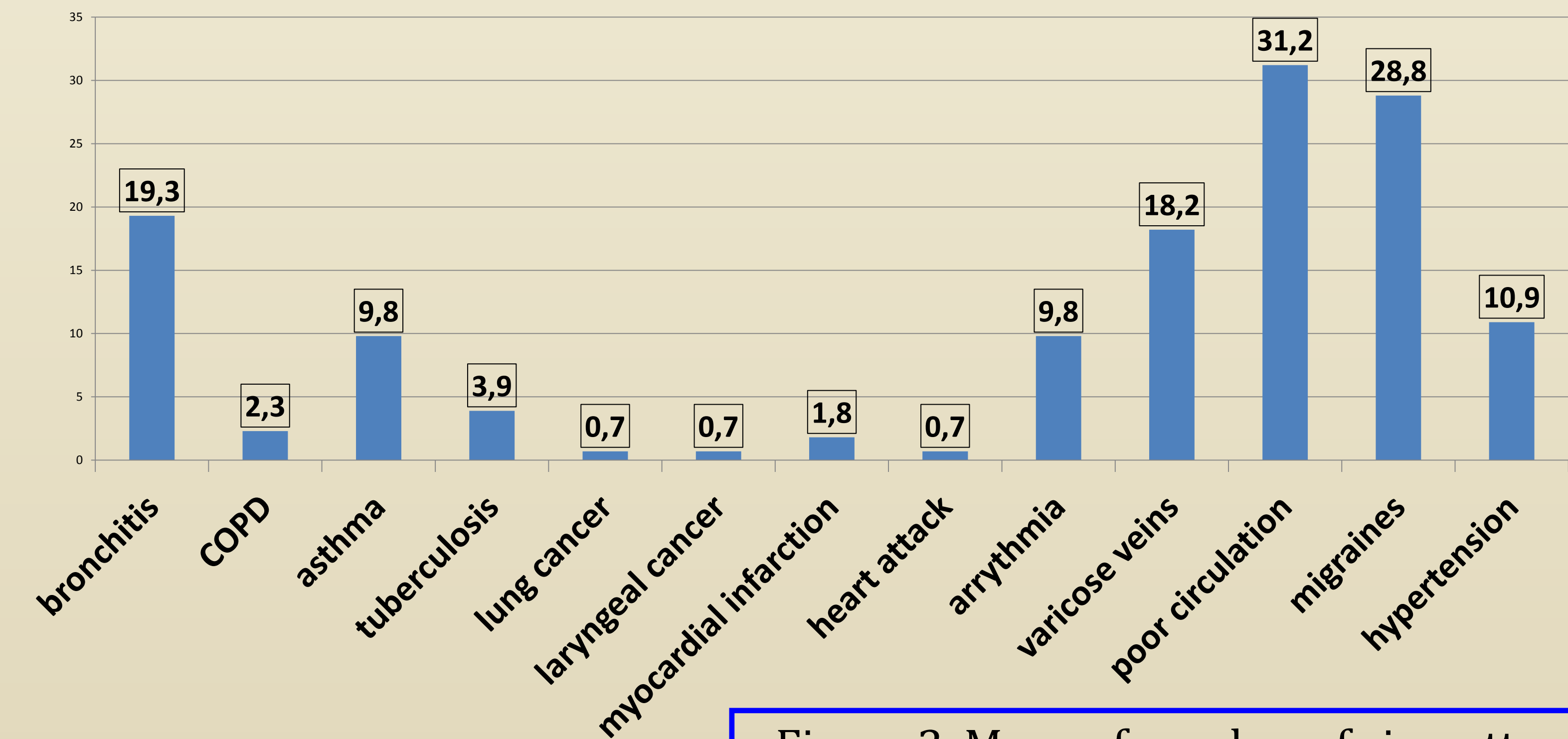


Figure 2. Gender differences respect to prevalence diseases

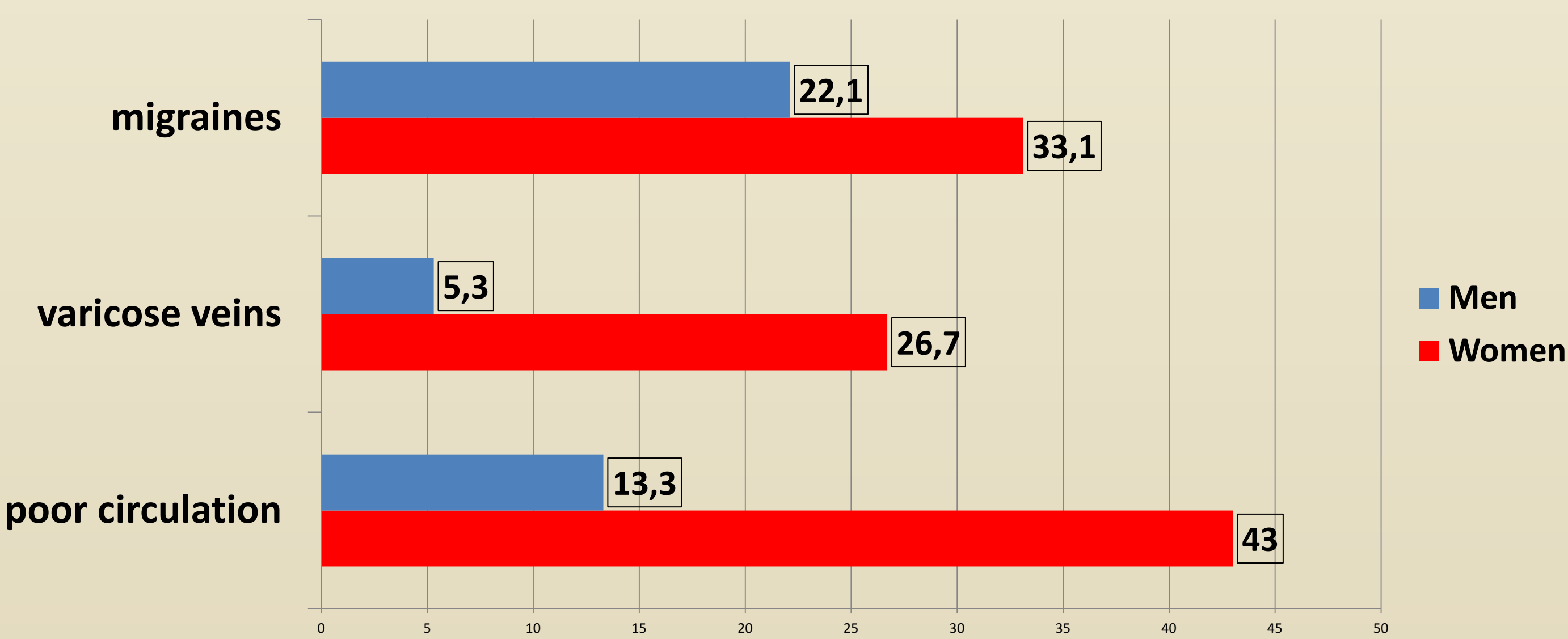
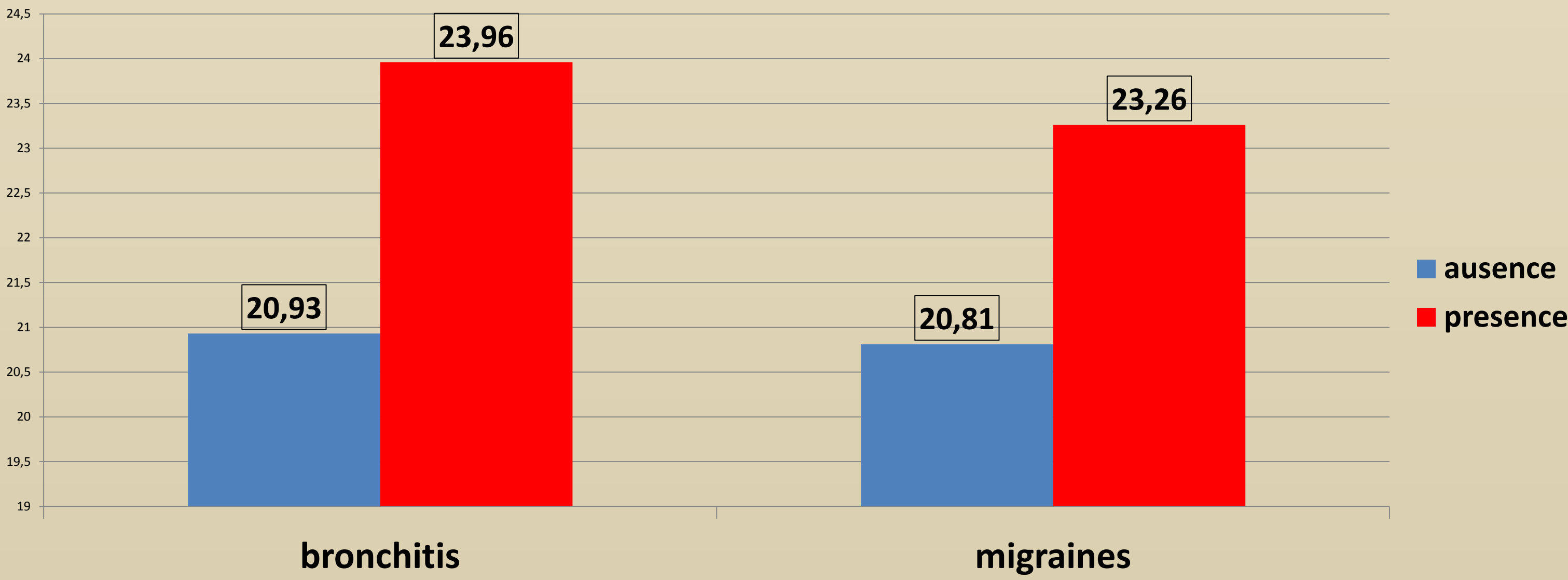


Figure 3. Mean of number of cigarettes smoked per day respect to prevalence diseases



Conclusions.

These results indicate the need for tobacco use prevention in young people and the early intervention for smokers to quit. This could reduce morbidity and mortality and improve quality of life.

References.

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