

*Smoking  
Heart: Smo*

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# Doctor slams link between smoking and heart disease

By LEE-LENG WHONG

THE conventional view that cigarette smoking causes heart diseases is one of the biggest fallacies in medical history, according to Dr Carl Seltzer of America's Harvard University.

Dr Seltzer said yesterday that four studies undertaken by scientists to relate smoking to heart diseases had been unscientific.

He said the Doll-Hill study in Britain, Hammond's study of 1 million men and women, a U.S. veteran's study and the Framingham heart study in the U.S. had all made the false assumption that the health characteristics of former smokers and continuing smokers in their samples were alike.

"You cannot compare apples with oranges," said Dr Seltzer. You cannot assume ex-smokers and continuing smokers are alike in every way except for the smoking habit.

Dr. Seltzer, who is honorary research associate at Harvard, says he has proof that people who give up smoking are very different to those who do not.

With three other researchers he conducted an investigation to show that the differences were present before they gave up smoking.

His study used computerised health records of 40,000 Americans all of whom received three or more annual check-ups under a medical care program.

They were divided into three groups, the non-smokers, the smokers who were later to give up and the continuing smokers.

Among the men, it was found that those who were later to stop smoking were healthier. They had less evidence of chest pain, leg pain and breathlessness and had larger capacity to take air into their lungs than the persistent smokers.

"No wonder the persistent smokers were less healthy," he said.

Dr Seltzer referred to another study by Professor G. Rose and Professor D. Hamilton of the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Science, which he personally had nothing to do with, but which gave the same results.

He said his evidence was in print and no one in the medical profession had yet come up to criticise him.

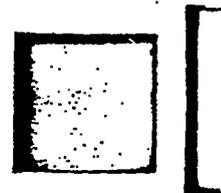
Dr Seltzer has been smoking since he was 14 but says this had nothing to do with his challenge to the view that smoking is dangerous.

"In 1964, the USA Surgeon-General's report on smoking and health stated male smokers had a higher rate of heart diseases and the medical profession immediately picked it up and said smoking caused heart diseases," he said.

"The report said there was no clear causal connection between the two. I contributed one chapter to it."



DR SELTZER . . . "You can't compare apples with oranges."



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## Former-smoker studies challenged

SYDNEY: A visiting American academic says he has new evidence that overturns the conventional view of the connection between smoking and heart disease.

Dr Carl C. Saltzer, a Harvard Fellow, who also holds a professorship from Tufts University, Massachusetts, challenges the notion that people who give up smoking can reduce their chances of heart disease.

He said there was new evidence

that the studies on which this view has been based had been faultily conducted.

Two more-recent studies supported his view.

One of them, with which he was connected and which was soon to appear in *The Journal of Chronic Diseases*, was based on 40,000 people in California and showed that former smokers, before they stopped smoking, were considerably different in many characteristics from continuing smokers — and therefore could not be used

as a random sample of continuing smokers. This did not allow their eventual heart-disease rates to be properly compared.

Former smokers, before they stopped smoking, were healthier than continuing smokers, so it was hardly surprising they had lower rates of heart disease.

"It is not due to stopping smoking, but to the fact that they are different kinds of people to begin with", he said.

*Saltzer*  
*Smoking Constitution*  
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