



April 21, 2016 – Grand Rapids, MI

## Smoking and Exercise

What are we doing well when it comes to health habits? Based on the study published in the Mayo Clinic Proceedings, we seem to be getting the message that we shouldn't smoke tobacco: 71% of all Americans don't smoke based on the data from the NHANES data set. This wasn't just a questionnaire; the participants had their blood tested as part of their participation in the study. You can lie on a questionnaire, but you can't fool a blood test for metabolites found in cigarette smoke.

Better doesn't mean good enough in my opinion. I used to smoke years ago, and I understand that it can be tough to quit. Use the gum. Use the patch. You might try hypnosis—it has a fairly good success rate. But however you do it, quit. This is the single most important health habit you have to change.

When it comes to exercise, 46% of all those tested reached the minimal recommendation of 150 minutes per week of moderate to vigorous exercise. If these weren't tested via an accelerometer, I'd be very suspicious. That seems high to me. However, these variables are all independent markers of cardiovascular health. People who walk their dogs every day would qualify in this category. This is better than we've done in the past.



While these definitely need improvement, you haven't really seen anything yet. I'll finish up on Saturday.

What are you prepared to do today?

**Dr. Chet**

**Reference:** Mayo Clin Proc. 2016 Apr;91(4):432-42.

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