

Press release for immediate release

The health crisis is a good opportunity to stop smoking.

On the occasion of World No Tobacco Day the Jules Bordet Institute is making the connection between Covid-19 and stopping smoking



Brussels, 28 May 2021 – For more than a year now Covid-19 has disrupted our lives, jeopardising our health, limiting our social contacts, interfering with our day-to-day lives and changing our way of working. Yet the coronavirus could have a positive impact on smokers. What if this time of health crisis was the right time to stop smoking? Martial Bodo, tobacco addiction

specialist at the Jules Bordet Institute, explains the links between smoking and Covid-19 and why this crisis is the right time to rid ourselves of the addiction.

"Smokers have a reduced risk of developing serious forms of the disease" False!

At the start of the pandemic there were a lot of reports suggesting that due to the effect of nicotine smokers were better protected against Covid-19.

In truth, smoking reduces lung capacity and makes the smoker more vulnerable to respiratory infections in general. Covid-19 is a disease that principally affects the lungs and respiratory channels. Smoking reduces the body's ability to defend itself against respiratory diseases, coronavirus included. In addition to respiratory problems, smoking causes serious cardiac, cardio-vascular and circulatory problems as well as a whole series of cancers (of the lung, tongue and throat for example). It is having a healthy immune system that gives you the best possible chance of defending yourself against Covid-19.

The possible protective effects of nicotine against Covid-19 have never been proven. Nicotine, present in tobacco but also in electronic cigarettes with a nicotine refill, is a drug that induces dependency. Its consumption is not something to be taken lightly.

Never forget that smoking kills about 17,000 people every year in Belgium, which is 47 a day. A figure that does not include all those who develop comorbidities due to serious smoking-related illnesses.

A special period conducive to stopping smoking.

This period of confinement can be the opportunity to stop smoking. If nothing else, Covid-19 has focused minds on health. We have become acutely aware of just how fragile health can be and of the need to look ourselves. Wearing a mask has become the norm to protect ourselves. Taking it off to smoke removes this protection.

"This period creates a sense of lost freedoms. Freeing oneself from the slavery imposed by tobacco dependency is, on the other hand, the acquisition of a new freedom," explains Martial Bodo.

The coronavirus has totally upset our day-to-day life and routines, with fewer social contacts, less travelling and in many cases telework. These changes all impact on our smoking habits. For smokers who were used to smoking at particular moments in the day this can be an opportunity to stop. We are also spending more time at home. Stopping smoking also means no longer imposing passive smoking on other members of our household.

This period can be seen as one that can provide a stimulus for breaking with old habits and creating new, healthier routines.

A team of professionals fully dedicated to supporting smokers.

At the Jules Bordet Institute a team of tobacco addiction specialists accompanies and supports all those who want to take steps to stop smoking. Consultations are at the Institute's screening clinic. You do not need to be a hospital patient and the service is open to all and the first eight consultations are fully reimbursed by your health insurance. Consultations are in French, Dutch or English.

Go to the Jules Bordet Institute website to find out more about the CAF, the Help Centre for Smokers: <https://www.bordet.be/en/practical-informations>

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About the Jules Bordet Institute

An integrated multidisciplinary centre, unique in Belgium, the Jules Bordet Institute is an autonomous hospital devoted exclusively to cancer.

For 80 75 years, the Jules Bordet Institute has been providing its patients with diagnostic and therapeutic strategies at the forefront of progress to prevent, detect and actively combat cancer. The Institute pursues three missions: care, research and teaching. Its international reputation attracts the world's leading cancer experts. Its spirit of innovation has enabled it to participate in the development and discovery of major new methods of diagnosis and treatment with the aim of bringing the findings to the patient as rapidly as possible.

In May 2018, the Jules Bordet Institute received official accreditation and designation from the OEIC (Organisation of European Cancer Institutes) as a "Comprehensive Cancer Centre", a quality label reserved for multidisciplinary cancer care institutions whose activities include research and teaching. The only Comprehensive Cancer Center accredited by the OEIC in Belgium.

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Institut Jules Bordet, Association Hospitalière de Bruxelles régie par la loi du 8 juillet 1976
Jules Bordet Instituut, Ziekenhuisvereniging van Brussel onderworpen aan de wet van 8 juli 1976



The Jules Bordet Institute is a member of the Iris and Université Libre de Bruxelles hospital networks. With its 160 beds dedicated exclusively to cancer patients, every year the Institute treats more than 6,000 in-patients, 15,000 out-patients and provides 84,000 consultations. To effectively meet future demographic and scientific developments, a new Bordet Institute is being built on the ULB Anderlecht campus, next to the Erasmus Hospital. Inauguration is scheduled for the end of 2021.

www.bordet.be

About the Friends of the Bordet Institute

For more than 50 years, "The Friends of the Bordet Institute" have been financing research against cancer research at the Jules Bordet Institute, the reference centre in the fight against cancer in Belgium and abroad. As the Institute's biggest private donor, it has given close to 13 million euros to the Institute in the past five years.

Considerable progress has been made in the field of oncology in recent years. Our understanding of the biological origin of cancer is growing all the time. Whereas 10 years ago we spoke of the microscopic analysis of tumours, today we speak of genetic profile, of sequencing, etc. Dozens of new molecules and markers have been developed, permitting the advent of personalised treatment. This progress has to a large extent been made possible through the extraordinary technological progress of recent years. But these new techniques that now enable us to probe the infinitesimally small are increasingly expensive.

For more than 50 years, the help of the "Friends" has enabled the Jules Bordet Institute to pursue its research using the most advanced technologies, thereby providing patients with the most innovative screening and treatment techniques. Techniques that generate life and hope.

By helping and supporting "The Friends of the Bordet Institute" you are participating in the many research programmes that they support and that all pursue a single aim: victory for life.

To find out more about the association The Friends of the Jules Bordet Institute, go to the website www.amis-bordet.be
To find out more about the "101 tables pour la vie", go to the website www.101tables.com