

Pets in Lower Socioeconomic Communities Have a Higher Exposure to Second-Hand Smoke

A cross-sectional study using urinary cotinine testing



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BACKGROUND

Lower socioeconomic status (SES) is associated with higher rates of smoking. We hypothesized that pets living in lower SES areas are more likely to be exposed to second-hand smoke (SHS).



METHODS



Urine samples from pets submitted for routine testing



Assigned to SES groups based on ZIP code: Low, Lower-middle, Upper-middle, High

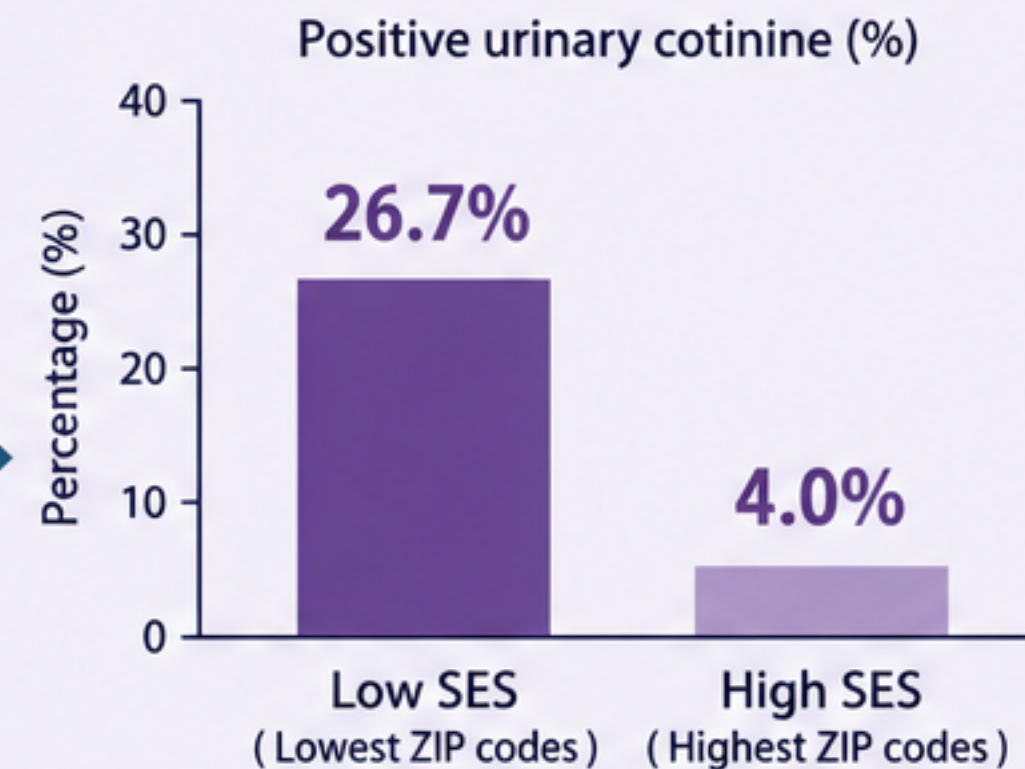


Urinary cotinine detected with a point of care assay (positive = exposure to SHS)



Results compared using logistic regression

RESULTS



Pets living in the lowest socioeconomic areas had a 6.7-fold higher rate of SHS exposure.



CONCLUSION

The rate of exposure to second-hand smoke, as supported by urinary cotinine levels, is much higher in pets in low socioeconomic areas. Veterinary teams can play an important role in promoting smoking cessation and connecting clients with resources to quit.

IMPLICATIONS



SHS affects the health of pets and people.



Focus outreach and education in low SES communities.



Provide resources and support to encourage smoking cessation.