



*Research Awards Nationwide 2012-2013
American Lung Association*

Sun Kim, PhD
University of Massachusetts
Social Behavioral Research Grant 2008-2010

Finding Effective Ways to Get Korean Americans to Quit Smoking

Korean male immigrants in the United States have the highest rate of current smoking and the highest rate of cancer deaths caused by smoking among subgroups of the Asian American population. However, this is also one of the groups studied least in regards to smoking and smoking cessation. Many Asian Americans, including Korean Americans, tend not to seek treatment for smoking cessation that is available in public healthcare settings due to language and cultural differences. In addition, Korean Americans have been identified as the group with the highest uninsured rate of all racial and ethnic groups, including Hispanics.

In an effort to prevent lung diseases caused by smoking, Dr. Kim sought to identify psychological, social, cultural, and behavioral factors that may predict Korean Americans' willingness to quit smoking and to seek cessation treatment. She also wanted to explore their experiences with the treatment, particularly regarding actual and perceived difficulties accessing the treatment. Dr. Kim interviewed 168 Korean males and 94 Korean females who had smoked daily for the previous six months. Those who were interested in quitting received smoking cessation counseling. The study helped Dr. Kim to understand how Korean women differ from Korean men in smoking and quitting behaviors, which warrants the development and implementation of gender-specific smoking cessation interventions. She developed a proposal for a smoking cessation program delivered via webcam, which provides privacy in a community with a strong social taboo against women smokers. Dr. Kim notes that many Asian female smokers refuse to seek help because they fear others will find out they smoke. She hopes to find funding for her new study, which will also include other Asian American female populations.

Dr. Kim has received a National Institutes of Health/ National Institute on Drug Abuse grant to study tobacco dependence treatment for Asian Americans.

Sun Kim, PhD, RN, is assistant professor of psychiatry and Graduate School of Nursing, University of Massachusetts Medical School. Her research interests include translational research in tobacco dependence treatment for specific populations including Asian Americans and individuals with HIV infection, multicultural research in addiction, and the process of organizational change in addiction treatment programs for adoption of evidence-based practices.

Publications:

Kim SS, Fang H, DiFranza J, Ziedonis D, Ma G. (in press). Gender differences in the Fagerstrom Test for Nicotine Dependence in Korean Americans. *Journal of Smoking Cessation*.