



Tobacco Use and Nicotine Addiction in Pediatric Cardiology Practices

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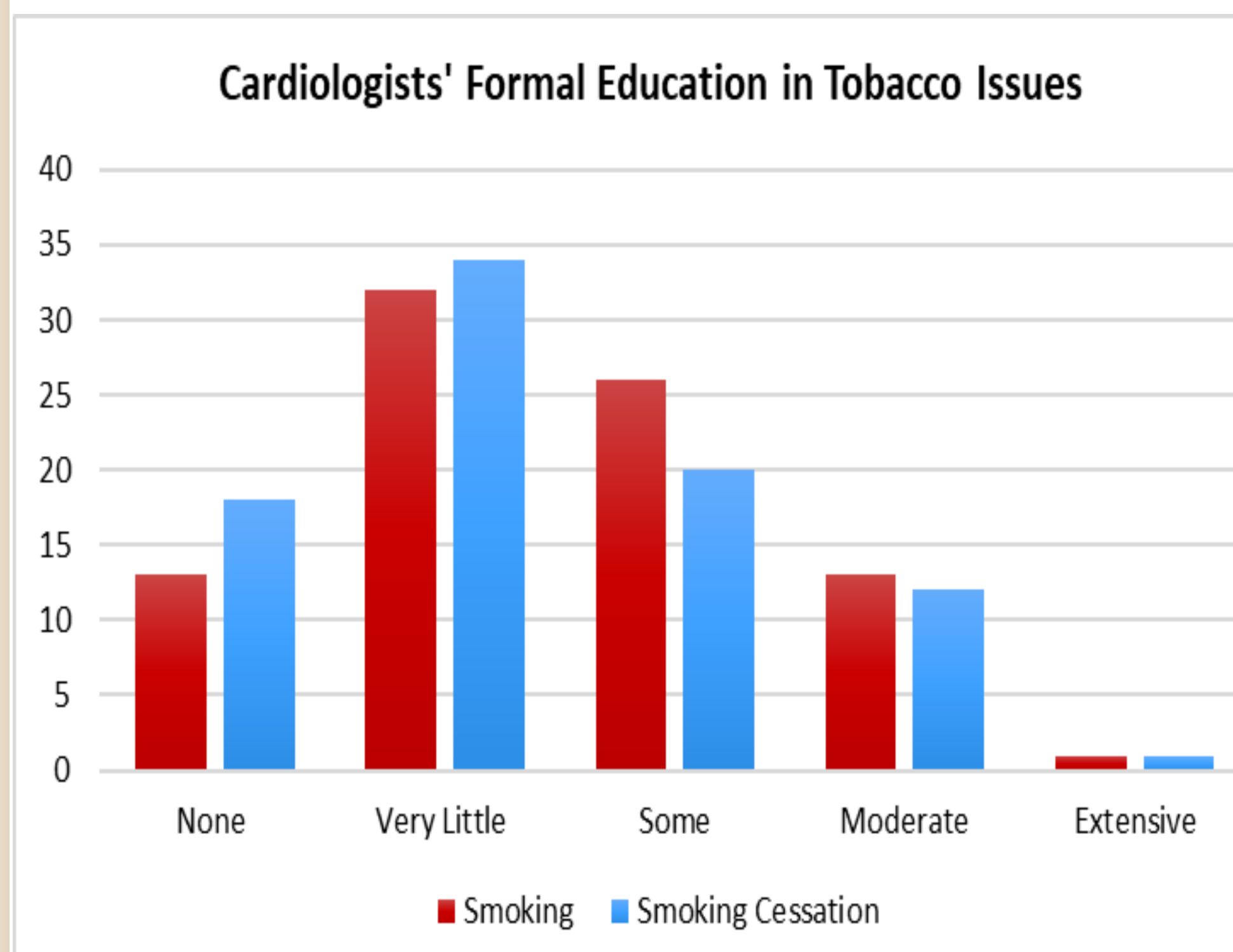
BACKGROUND

Passive and active tobacco smoking are well known health hazards which may disproportionately affect patients with chronic cardiovascular conditions. Pediatric cardiologists care for patients with varying degrees of medical complexity, the most fragile of which are infants between surgical stages of single ventricle palliation. Despite the potential risks, pediatric cardiologists may not prioritize minimizing their patients exposure to active and passive smoking.

METHODS

We sent an anonymous online survey to the memberships of American Academy of Pediatrics Section on Cardiology and Cardiac Surgery and the Pediheart online community which addressed their clinical practices regarding smoking and passive smoking.

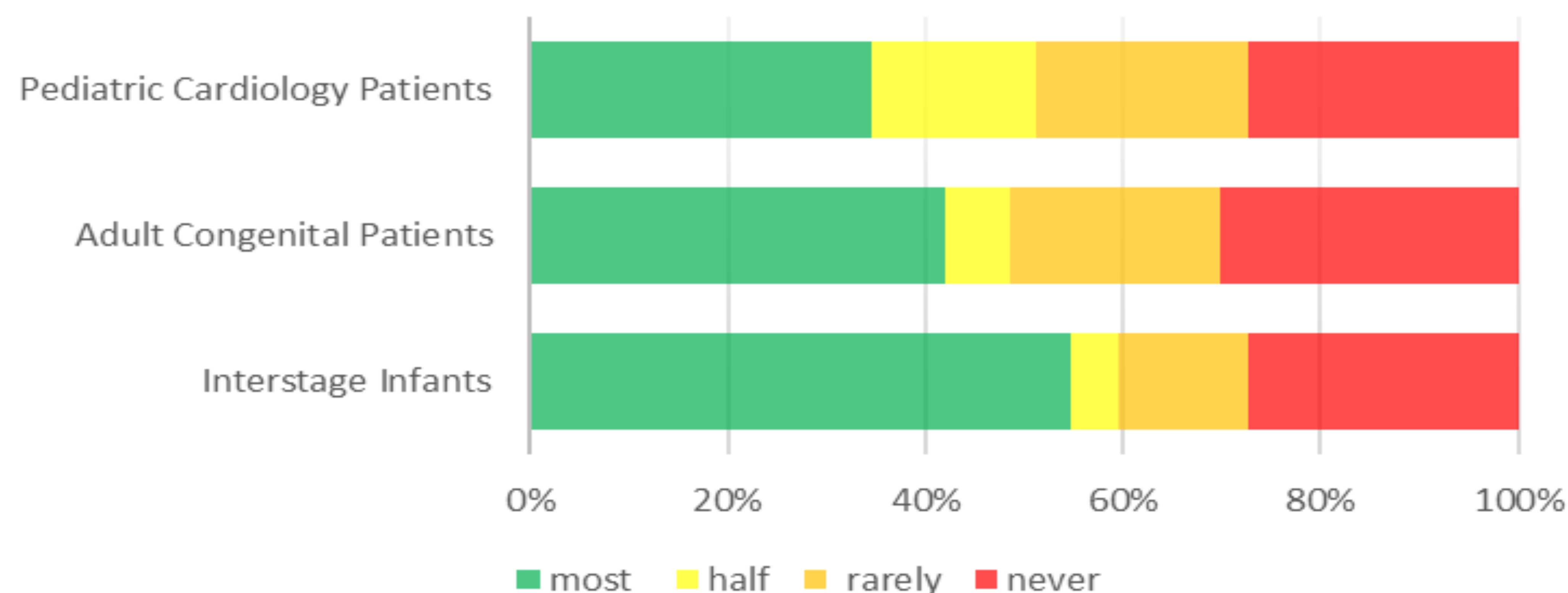
We received 87 responses which could be analyzed.



Despite the known health problems associated with smoking and passive smoking, pediatric cardiologists do not consistently address these issues in their clinical practices.

RESULTS

FREQUENCY OF HOUSEHOLD SMOKING BAN RECOMMENDATIONS



Screening Practices among Respondents

	Does Your Program Screen for Tobacco Exposure?	Do You Personally Screen For Tobacco Exposure?
Patients		
Hospitalization	74.58%	29.27%
Pediatric Cardiology Clinic	76.30%	59.30%
Adult Congenital Clinic	93.10%	60.24%
Family Members		
Prenatal Assessment	68.89%	32.53%
Newborn Assessment	73.55%	34.15%
Hospitalization	75.47%	28.92%
Pediatric Cardiology Clinic	76.92%	49.41%
Adult Congenital Clinic	75.00%	42.68%

CONCLUSIONS

This survey suggests that the issues of active and passive smoke exposure are not high priorities for pediatric cardiologists.

Most cardiologists had limited education on the topic, screening for tobacco exposure is not uniform and even for their most fragile patients, 40% of pediatric cardiologists rarely or never recommend a household smoking ban.

Increased intervention to reduce active and passive smoking may improve the health of pediatric cardiology patients and their families.

We would like to thank our survey respondents and Vivian Thorne at the American Academy of Pediatrics.