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Forecasting sex differences in mortality in high income nations The contribution of smoking

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Abstract

To address the question of whether the sex differential in mortality will in the future rise, fall, or stay the same, this study uses the relative smoking prevalence among males and females to forecast future changes in relative smoking-attributed mortality. Data on 21 high income nations from 1975 to 2000 and a lag between smoking prevalence and mortality allow forecasts up to 2020. Averaged across nations, the results reveal narrowing of measures of the sex differential in smoking mortality. However, continued widening of the differential in non-smoking mortality would counter narrowing due to smoking and lead to future increases in the female advantage overall, particularly in nations at late stages of the cigarette epidemic (such as the United States and the United Kingdom) where narrowing of the smoking differential has already begun to slow.

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