



## CANCER PREVENTION & RESEARCH INSTITUTE OF TEXAS

Award ID:  
RP170095

Project Title:  
Exercise as an aid to smoking cessation in anxiety vulnerable adults

Award Mechanism:  
Individual Investigator Research Awards for Prevention and Early  
Detection

Principal Investigator:  
Smits, Jasper

Entity:  
The University of Texas at Austin

### Lay Summary:

Cigarette smoking is the leading cause of death and disability in the United States. Although smoking has declined since 1964, it is still very common among some groups of people. One such group is persons with emotional symptoms and disorders. There has been little success in developing treatments for smoking cessation for smokers with affective disturbances.

Recent work suggests that being sensitive to, and less tolerant of, stress is associated with many problems in daily life. People with high 'stress sensitivity' tend to use avoidant strategies to cope with their stress, like smoking. Also, people with high levels of stress sensitivity report stronger beliefs that smoking will reduce negative feelings. They also report having a harder time quitting and in fact, are less successful at doing so. This information suggests that stress sensitivity is important to target during smoking cessation treatment for smokers with affective vulnerabilities.

This clinical trial will evaluate a treatment that integrates exercise to reduce stress sensitivity among high stress sensitive smokers. It builds directly from our recent work and we now seek to adapt it to a more a more accessible and sustainable application. Results will provide important information on the benefit of an integrated intervention that could be used in the community for smokers at great risk for relapse and who do not benefit from existing alternative treatments. This study is the first to test an intervention for stress sensitive smokers and has the potential to help at-risk individuals experience quitting success and, ultimately, reduce the burden of tobacco-related cancers in Texas.