

## **P-111 - USING NON-REMOVEABLE REMINDERS TO AVOID MALADAPTIVE AND IMPULSIVE HABITS**

E.Yechiam

Max Wertheimer Minerva Center for Cognitive Studies, Technion, Haifa, Israel

We examined the effectiveness of a novel behavior modification method for dysfunctional and impulsive habits, based on non-removable reminders (NrR). NrRs were implemented by having participants wear non-removable wristbands designated to constantly remind them of their decision to quit the targeted habit (nail biting, smoking). In study 1 participants were eighty nail-biters who resolved to quit. The NrR approach was contrasted with an aversion-based behavioral modification technique. Recovery was assessed after 3 and 6 weeks of treatment, and in a 5-month follow up. The NrR method was associated with lower drop-out rate, and was as successful as the aversion-based method altogether. When considering only non drop-outs, the aversion based method was more effective. In study 2 participants were 60 chronic smokers who participated in a two-months program to discontinue the habit. The dependent measures were Cotinine levels in urine and self reported smoking frequencies. The NrR method was contrasted with a self-control technique using a two by two research design. The results also point out to the relative merit of reminders. Overall, the findings suggest that the use of constantly present reminders broadens the target population that can benefit from non-supervised therapeutic approaches for behavior modification. There is a growing body of evidence from decision research that choice is a prominent factor in dysfunctional habits. However, the subfield of decision architecture, or decision change, seems to focus mostly on economic decisions. The current work suggests the value of decision modification techniques applied to maladaptive habits.