

Plain packaging reduces allure of cigarettes: study

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Packets of cigarettes are pictured in a shop in central London on July 12, 2013. Scientists have said they had evidence that plain packaging for cigarettes diminishes the appeal of smoking, as anti-tobacco campaigners suggest.

Scientists on Monday said they had evidence that plain packaging for cigarettes diminishes the appeal of smoking, as anti-tobacco campaigners suggest.

European countries are considering whether to follow Australia, which last year became the first country in the world to sell [cigarettes](#) in plain packets.

In Australia's case, the cigarettes are sold in identical olive-green packets bearing the same typeface, in addition to health warnings.

Researchers questioned 536 smokers in the Australian state of Victoria during the transition phase, when both branded and plain-pack products were on sale. Nearly three-quarters of those interviewed were smoking from plain packets, and the others from branded packets.

Plain-pack smokers were 66 percent more likely to think their cigarettes were of poorer quality compared with a year earlier, and were 70 percent likelier to say they found them less satisfying.

They were also 81 percent likelier to have thought about quitting at least once a day during the previous week and to rate quitting as a higher priority in their lives compared to smokers using brand packs.

The study, published on *BMJ Open* by the British Medical Journal, did not follow up these smokers, to see what they thought or did after the transition period.

But, it says, the "early indication" is that drab packaging takes the gloss off [cigarette brands](#).

"Plain packaging is associated with lower smoking appeal, more support for the policy and more urgency to quit among adult smokers," it says.

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