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**Focus Group Report to
Health Canada – Office for Tobacco Control
on Attitudes Towards “Light” and “Mild” Cigarettes**

**PN 4361
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Prepared by: Environics Research Group Limited

Introduction

Environics Research is pleased to present this report of focus group findings to the Office of Tobacco Control of Health Canada. A series of 16 groups were convened in late-November, 1998 – four in each of Toronto, Edmonton, Halifax and Montreal. The findings of the Montreal groups, conducted in French, will be summarized under separate cover. The 12 English-language groups were screened as follows:

Toronto (Thursday and Monday, November 19 and 23, 1998) 4 groups - heavy and light smokers ages 18-30 and 31-50
Edmonton (Monday and Tuesday, November 23-24, 1998) 4 groups - heavy and light smokers ages 18-30 and 31-50
Halifax (Friday and Saturday, November 27-28, 1998) 4 groups - heavy and light smokers ages 18-30 and 31-50

The overall objective of this research was to determine smokers' beliefs regarding "light" and "mild" cigarettes and the extent to which they perceive any differences in the health impacts of them in comparison with regular cigarettes.

General Smoking Attitudes and Behaviour

Almost all of the participants reported that they began smoking as teenagers – usually around the ages of 12-14. Smoking at that age was appealing because it was often associated with a minor act of rebellion (i.e. stealing cigarettes from the parents, sneaking out to smoke) or out of some desire to fit in with other teenagers. Only a handful of smokers reported that they started smoking as adults.

The younger smokers (i.e. those aged 18 to 30) tended to express confidence that they would not keep smoking all their lives and that they could quit once they established themselves in terms of job and family. Many of these younger smokers were sceptical as to whether they were truly addicted to nicotine and thought they could “quit when they wanted to”. Others had already tried to quit a number of times and had not succeeded. Many of these younger smokers still regarded smoking as an act of rebellion and were often quite cynical about health concerns.

The older smokers (i.e. those aged 30 to 50) tended to be far more conflicted about their own smoking behaviour. Many reported feeling guilty about smoking near their children and about getting pressure from their families to quit. Almost all regretted ever having started smoking in the first place. There was a minority of older smokers – particularly in Edmonton and Montreal - who were more defensive and “unrepentant” about their smoking. They were more committed to the idea of continuing to smoke. This small minority of participants was often quite resentful of government anti-smoking initiatives and felt very stigmatized.

Participants varied a great deal in terms of quantities of cigarettes they smoked and the times of days when they would smoke. Those who smoked smaller quantities of cigarettes often reported smoking in specific situations such as while on the phone or while drinking either alcohol or coffee.

There were also some interesting patterns in terms of the brands of cigarettes that smokers reported using. Among the younger smokers in English Canada, DuMaurier was far and away the favourite brand. In Montreal, Player’s Light was also mentioned quite often in the 18 to 30 year old age group. The older 31 to 50 year old smokers were far more diverse in their choice of brand. In many cases there were literally as many brands mentioned among these people, as there were participants. It was also notable that in Edmonton – where cigarette taxes were never lowered – a large number of the heavier smokers reported rolling their own cigarettes as a way of saving money.

Quite a few participants also reported having one or two secondary brands they would frequently smoke either when they feel like a stronger or weaker taste, or when their favourite brand was not available. In many cases this secondary brand would be a very popular brand such as DuMaurier or Player’s Light that would be readily available when the smokers usual brand was not.

Awareness of Health Risks

Virtually all smokers who participated in these groups were well aware of the health risks associated with smoking. They could readily name a wide variety of smoking related illnesses such as cancer, emphysema, asthma, heart disease, effects on pregnancy and more. The older smokers often took these risks very seriously, but were simply not able to quit smoking. They often took a fatalistic attitude that their health was affected by factors beyond their control. Everyone knew someone who smoked all their life and lived to be 95 years old etc... However, many people in the older groups also had friends or family members who had died of lung cancer and they were clearly disturbed by this.

Younger smokers often think that these risks do not apply to them because they have not actually experienced any of these effects themselves. Many mentioned that they were waiting for smoking-related symptoms to occur before they would be willing to curb their habit.

As a rule, smokers felt that they personally knew all they needed to know about the health risks of smoking, though some did think that children and potential smokers should still be made aware of the risks.

Choice of Cigarette Brands

When asked how they chose the brand they smoked, responses from smokers ranged from choosing the same brand as parents, friends or family members, to going through a process of trial and error before finding a brand with the taste and strength they liked. A smaller number mentioned seeing what other people were buying at the counter or being attracted by particular packaging or advertising.

In general, the factors that go into the choice of cigarette brand include: perceptions of the taste, image and popularity of the brands among friends and family. Almost no one in any of the groups volunteered that they had chosen their cigarette brand specifically on the basis of it being less damaging to their health.

Smokers in all cities and age groups were very much of the opinion that cigarette brands differ markedly in strength of taste and in flavour. One key point is that the "strength" of a cigarette is not initially interpreted to mean how healthy or unhealthy it is, but rather how "harsh" the taste is when it is smoked and the impact it has on the throat and lungs during the smoke. Many smokers said that they chose a light cigarette brand because they could not tolerate the strength of a strong cigarette in terms of how it would make their throat and lungs feel.

There is also considerable awareness that some entire brands are stronger than others are. For example, many smokers perceive the whole Player's or Export "A" brands line of cigarettes as being stronger than other brands such as DuMaurier. To the extent that

participants were aware of these differences in strength, it was based more on their experience with sampling these brands than with reading descriptors such as "light" or "mild". Participants were often well aware that the "light" version of one brand could be harsher than the regular make of another brand.

There was, to some extent, a feeling that some brands differ in terms of their image – Player's is associated with sailors and cowboys and DuMaurier is more young and fashionable. There is also some awareness of the kinds of events that certain brands are associated with as a result of their sponsorship – for example Benson & Hedges and fireworks competitions.

Relative Harmfulness of Cigarette Brands

Smokers in these focus groups exhibited a range of views as to whether some brands of cigarettes might be less harmful to human health than others. A plurality of participants felt that some types of cigarettes might be marginally less harmful than others. However, they were quick to point out that they this did not take away from the fact that all cigarettes are harmful to a person's health. Differences in tar and nicotine levels between regular and light cigarettes are thought to be minor and counteracted by the fact that people may smoke more of the light cigarettes or drag the smoke in deeper. Smokers are typically well aware that there is no safe amount of tar or nicotine in a cigarette.

There were some differences on this issue between the heavy smokers and those who smoked fewer cigarettes. Those who smoked regularly – especially men – tended to be more dismissive of there being any differences in health impacts of different cigarettes. Those who only smoked a few cigarettes a day and especially those who were consciously trying to quit or reduce their smoking, were more likely to believe that "light" cigarettes might be less harmful.

A number of smokers also had some very anecdotal views about whether certain brands were more harmful. For example, in almost every group at least one person would make some mention of Player's cigarettes having fiberglass in their filters. Export "A" were frequently mentioned as being the "green death" and being among the worse cigarettes in terms of how harsh and damaging they were to a person's lungs.

Several participants also had beliefs about certain cigarette brands being worse in terms of the additives they contain. There is a common misperception among smokers that much of the harm to health from cigarettes is not from nicotine itself, but from "additives" that are put in. Some participants even thought that "light" cigarettes were worse for human health than regular cigarettes because additives and bleach were thought to be part of the process of making them "light".

Another common view was that simple "light" cigarettes were no better than regular, but that it was possible that "ultra-light" or "ultra-mild" cigarettes could be somewhat less harmful if smoked in the same way as a regular cigarette. Those who smoked regular

cigarettes pointed out that when they did smoke the odd "light" and especially "ultra-light" cigarette, they often had to tear off the filter to get the kind of smoking experience they craved.

Overall, the consensus was that while some types of cigarettes might be slightly less harmful, there was no getting away from the fact that any and all cigarettes are bad for human health. No participants believed that there was any "harmless" way to smoke cigarettes – regardless of brand or cigarette type. Nonetheless, a minority did think that lighter cigarettes must be at least a little bit less harmful since they had less of a harsh impact on the smoker's throat and lungs when smoked. It stood to reason to these people that there must be some difference in health impacts of light cigarettes compared to regular cigarettes, but no one felt that this was a very big difference.

Attention to Tar and Nicotine Levels

Most participants will look at the tar and nicotine and carbon monoxide levels on their cigarette packs out of curiosity. This is usually done with the brand that the person already smokes. Most said that the only time they ever checked the tar and nicotine levels was when they first started smoking, when they switched brands, or when they were planning on quitting/cutting down.

Smokers occasionally reported looking at these ingredient levels and using the information to help them choose a brand. This information would be used to pick a similar brand if the usual brand was not available. Tar and nicotine levels are used more as a way of determining the strength of taste in a cigarette brand, than in determining health impacts.

A few participants also reported using these ingredient levels as part of their strategy to quit smoking. They would try to ratchet down to smoking brands with lower and lower levels of tar and nicotine in order to reduce the addiction to nicotine. These people often believed that by moving to lighter and lighter cigarettes with lower and lower levels of tar and nicotine and carbon monoxide, they were gradually in "withdrawal" from nicotine.

Most smokers initially deny that they use this information to choose their brand. However, a significant minority do pay attention to these tar and nicotine levels, usually more as a way of determining the strength of the taste of the cigarette in question.

In every group, there were at least a few smokers who were very well informed about the fact that these tar and nicotine levels are only measuring the amounts sucked into a cigarette machine under the most controlled situations and that the differences are entirely the results of the efficiency of the filter. However, a large number of smokers were under the misconception that the differences in tar and nicotine were found in the tobacco itself.

Personal Use of Light and Mild Cigarettes

Most, if not all respondents, have at least tried a light or mild cigarette at one time or other. In many cases this was Player's Light, which is actually a very strong cigarette despite the "Light" moniker. However, it can be said that smokers have generally sampled a wide variety of cigarettes over the years in trying to find a favourite brand and also in borrowing ("bumming") cigarettes from others.

Many described finding regular cigarettes to be too harsh and as making them feel ill. It seems that now with "extra light" and "ultra light" cigarettes being in existence, cigarettes that are known simply as "Light" are virtually seen to be the standard and regular cigarettes are regarded as being "strong".

Among younger participants, light cigarettes were quite prevalent as the brand of choice and this may be a reflection of the way in which light cigarettes are now seen to be the norm. Older smokers were more apt to still smoke regular cigarettes since many of them smoked regularly long before light cigarettes were even on the market. However, a number of the older smokers started out with a regular cigarette, but evolved to a lighter brand as they found they wanted a less "harsh" smoking experience.

It is notable that while many smokers report having moved from regular cigarettes to lighter ones over the years, virtually no one starts out smoking light cigarettes and then moves on to the lighter brands. There are a variety of reasons for this. Firstly, many smokers report that the regular cigarettes were too strong tasting, were harsh on their throats and made them cough a lot. Also, a few in each group had been steadily shifting to lighter and lighter brands of cigarettes in an effort to wean themselves off of cigarettes altogether.

The only cases where people reported shifting from light to regular was in the case of a few smokers who switched from regular cigarettes to light cigarettes and found that they were compensating for the switch by smoking more cigarettes and taking a harder drag on the cigarette. These people said they eventually switched back to their regular brand since smoking light cigarettes had proven to be counter-productive.

Many respondents also reported having tampered with the filters on light cigarettes to achieve a more enjoyable smoke: some cut off the filters, some wrapped the filter in scotch tape, and others covered the filter or squeezed the filter with their fingers while they smoked. This was almost always done when the smoker borrowed a cigarette that was lighter than the brand they usually smoked and they were trying to duplicate the strength of their regular brand. No one reported tampering with filters on a regular basis with the brand they usually smoke. Smokers were generally very aware of the differences in filters between various cigarette types and the fact that some lighter cigarettes have holes on the side of the filter.

A number of smokers did report that when they switched from regular to lighter cigarettes their smoking habits changed. They reported that they went through a pack of light cigarettes faster than a pack of regular cigarettes. They also reported sucking harder

on the light cigarettes. As mentioned above, a few people who consistently found themselves smoking more of the lighter cigarettes eventually switched back to smoking regular cigarettes. Most reported that this was only an initial reaction to the lower amount of tar and nicotine in each puff of light cigarettes. Eventually, their smoking habit with light cigarettes was the same as it had been with regular cigarettes and they stuck with the lighter brand.

Perceptions of Light and Mild Cigarettes

Most respondents did not feel that any particular brand of cigarettes was significantly more or less harmful, however, many felt that smoking light cigarettes was a little bit less harmful than smoking regulars if you smoked the same number of cigarettes in the same way. Most participants were well aware that light cigarettes are mostly only lighter tasting and not necessarily any less harmful.

There was a belief that if any cigarettes are less harmful; it is less because of the "light" vs. "regular" issue as due to the presence or absence of additives! Some respondents thought that "light" cigarettes must contain more additives, because they believed that the tar and nicotine had been taken out (of the light cigarettes) and must have been replaced by additives. In general, many smokers are convinced that much of the toxicity in cigarettes is caused by "additive" in cigarettes and that there would be less harm to human health if the tobacco were "natural".

Most smokers were aware that only the filter actually changes when going from regular to light cigarettes. However, a minority thought that the contents (and not simply the filter) differ between light/mild and regular cigarettes in terms of tobacco, amounts of tar and nicotine in the tobacco, and additives. The fact that certain filters have visible holes in them is a major reason why people were aware that the filter itself could have a major impact on the amount of tar and nicotine consumed in a cigarette.

Some misconceptions do still exist. For example, many people in Edmonton use roll-your-own cigarettes. These people will buy Player's Light tobacco thinking that it is lighter than Player's Regular and then use a whole other brand of filter. They are not aware that unless the corresponding filters are bought, the tobacco itself is identical!

Some respondents that smoked light, extra light or ultra light tended to believe that these were not as harmful as smoking regular cigarettes, but only slightly less so! Most people who smoke light cigarettes are adamant that they did not choose light cigarettes to do themselves any favours in terms of lesser impacts on their health, but rather because they preferred the weaker taste. One or two individuals mentioned that a parent or a doctor had once told them that if they were going to smoke at all, they should at least smoke light cigarettes. But this was a not a common phenomenon.

The vast majority of smokers did not believe that light /mild cigarettes are any less addictive than regular cigarettes. A couple of people said they were switching to lighter

cigarettes as part of a quitting strategy. This strategy consisted of ratcheting down the amount of nicotine they were consuming. Many smokers reported that when they switched to light cigarettes, they found themselves either smoking more cigarettes, or drawing a deeper puff in order to get the same quantity of nicotine. However, this was usually described as only a temporary effect and that eventually they would be smoking the same quantity of light cigarettes as they had been smoking when they smoked regular cigarettes.

Participants were also asked about their attitudes towards the meaning of the word "mild" as opposed to "light" on cigarette packages. Many respondents thought that "mild" referred more specifically to taste, whereas "light" could also refer to the amount of tar and nicotine in cigarettes or to the efficiency of the filter. Others felt that "mild" was basically another word for "light" that some cigarette companies simply prefer to use.

Attitudes Towards the Tobacco Industry and It's Use of the Term "Light"

Smokers almost unanimously took the view that cigarette companies call some of their brands "light" as a marketing ploy or gimmick. Most were quite cynical about this and felt that by using the word "light", the manufacturers were trying to imply that they were healthier since the word light has many positive connotations (i.e. light in fat etc...). The people who made this assertion invariably felt that they were not personally taken in by this strategy, but that other smokers probably were. A small number of smokers felt that the use of these terms was an honest attempt to describe a product, which genuinely is lighter in taste.

Younger smokers were even more apt to describe "light" and "mild" as a marketing ploy on the part of cigarette companies. They are more likely to understand the differences and similarities between light, mild and regular cigarettes. Older respondents were more confused about the differences between light, mild and regular cigarettes.

When asked, many thought that cigarette companies used the labels light and mild as a marketing gimmick, or to expand market share through new brands. Some felt that this was a strategy by the tobacco companies to get people to buy light cigarettes which are the same price as regular cigarettes, but which people tend to smoke more of – thereby boosting the number of packs sold. No one felt that cigarette companies were offering "light" brands of cigarettes out of any concern for the health of smokers!

In general, it was clear that even the most ardent smokers are quite cynical about the tobacco industry. At best it was seen as a being just another retail industry trying to make a profit using whatever gimmicks and manipulations of fact they could. At worst, it was seen as being one of the worst of all industries in terms of trying to deceive the public and get people addicted to cigarettes.

No one expressed very much sympathy for the cigarette companies. However, many smokers were also very quick to add that they themselves were to blame for the fact that

they smoke. In Edmonton in particular, there was a clear sentiment that the consumer should take it upon his or herself to research just how harmful various types of cigarettes might be.

Attitudes Towards Regulation of Light Cigarettes

Most smokers are **not** under the impression that there are any government regulations as to the use of the word "light" on cigarettes. They often expressed some vague sense that there must be laws on false advertising to prevent a cigarette company from calling cigarette "light" if it was identical in every way to the "regular" cigarette in the same brand family. Otherwise, no one was under the impression that there were currently any clearly quantifiable standards set out by law on the meaning of these terms. Smokers in Montreal and Edmonton were not bothered by this lack of regulation of the term light. Many of the smokers in these cities are weary of regulation of tobacco and most did not regard the term "light" as having very much currency in the first place. Many smokers said that they could tell whether a given cigarette was too strong or too light through trial and error. There was a consensus in all cities that regulation of the use of the term light should be a comparatively low priority compared to other ways of regulating tobacco and informing consumers (i.e.: additives and toxic constituents etc...).

Some smokers were under the impression that "light" cigarettes, as a group, had to be "lighter" in some way than regular cigarettes. Others understood that these terms were only relative and only described cigarettes in comparison to the regular cigarettes of the same brand. Quite a few smokers seemed to think of certain brands as being stronger across the board. For example, it is common knowledge that Player's and Export "A" are stronger brands than Matinee or DuMaurier. As a result it is assumed that while Player's Light must be lighter than Player's Filtered, it does not necessarily follow that Player's Light would be any lighter than DuMaurier Regular.

Many also thought that the government would not "allow" the companies to infer that a cigarette was lighter if it was not in any way whatsoever. Most however, did not believe that any standards were in place to regulate the issue of light and mild cigarettes. Many believed that same rules that apply to food should apply to cigarettes (as in low fat must be 50% lower than the regular brand).

The overall consensus among smokers was in favour of more information about the differences between "light/mild" and regular cigarettes. This was particularly evident after the preceding discussion that tended to leave smokers with the impression that they really did not know the whole story about the meaning of these terms. Only a couple of smokers in any of the groups did not want more information about this. They would like to be educated about whether or not the "lightness" is caused by the tobacco or by the filter. They also want to know more about just how the tar and nicotine levels work and how they only refer to the amounts consumed by smoking machines under the most controlled conditions.

Some ideas came up about relaying information to smokers included the following:

- 1-800 number on the cigarette packages that smokers could call to get more information on contents of particular brand
- fact sheets be made available where cigarettes are purchased to ease comparison between brands
- comparative tables on the inside of the package (where the calendar is) to list differences within brand

Many respondents would not only like to see the comparative levels of tar and nicotine within a brand, but would also like to see a list of all the contents in cigarettes – on the inside of the package. There is a broad awareness of the presence of many toxic constituents in tobacco, beyond the three currently listed.

There was no clear consensus across the board as to whether there was a need for more regulation of light and mild cigarettes. Women and to some extent those in Toronto and Halifax tended to favour more regulation, and were generally more disturbed to find out that no regulation exists. Men and people in Edmonton and Montreal were generally more hostile to the idea of establishing any regulation of the use of the term light. The terminology used often had a major impact on smoker's visceral reactions. When people are asked about how they felt about "government legislation" on "light" cigarettes, the reaction was quite negative. Similarly, the term "regulation" also gets a more negative reaction. These terms tends to make people think of bureaucracy and red tape that is not necessarily done to benefit the public.

When people were asked how they feel about the implementation of set standards on what the terms "light" and "mild" are supposed to signify, the reaction is more positive. Many smokers were not clear whether this would mean that government would set standards or whether these would be set by the tobacco companies themselves voluntarily.

There are several reasons why some smokers are ambivalent or even hostile to the idea of having regulations on the use of the term "light". Some of the smokers are simply becoming defensive about more government regulation of their habit. Many smokers feel like they have already been quite stigmatized by restriction on where they can smoke and by all the warning labels and are opposed to any more. Others expressed fear that any regulation of the term "light" might force their favourite brand to be altered to conform to the standard and that they may no longer like their brand at that point. As was noted above, many smokers feel that they had been through a lot of "trial and error" to find exactly the brand of cigarette that suited them. If their brand had to use a different tobacco or a different filter as a result of new regulations, they may then have to search for a new brand again.

Other smokers were much more in favour of regulation. These people saw this as a more of a consumer awareness issue. They felt that if a term such as light – with all of its connotations in terms of health and lightness – were to be put on a brand of cigarette, the

consumer has a right to know what it signifies and be protected from any false claims. Apart from a minority of smokers mostly in Edmonton, the consensus was that cigarette companies should be made accountable for the ways in which they describe their product. One idea was to more clearly explain how the "light" version of a brand differed from the regular version. This was seen as avoiding the problem described above of bringing in standards that would force tobacco companies to actually make changes to the cigarettes itself that would alter the taste.

If "guidelines" were set up in terms of what the different levels of lightness should mean for the tar and nicotine inhaled, this would be a big help in informing the public. However, there is one potential hazard of bringing in clear guidelines like this. As we saw above, very few smokers are actually choosing to smoke light cigarettes as a way of doing less damage to their health. In fact, many are already quite sceptical about whether or not this terminology means anything other than "lighter tasting". If set standards or guidelines were implemented, some smokers might take the information and standards as proof that there actually are brands of cigarettes that are less harmful than others.

When asked their perceptions of what the levels for tar and nicotine should be between regular, light, extra light and ultra light within a brand, most of the groups came up with the following: if regular is 100%, light should contain about 75% of the tar and nicotine, extra light should be about 50%, and ultra light should be about 25%. Most smokers were quite adamant that these terms of refer to how tar and nicotine inhaled can vary within the same brand. Smokers are more divided as to whether any standards on these descriptive terms should mean anything across the board – regardless of brand family.

The consensus among the smokers in these focus groups was that none of these possible new standards would have any impact on their own smoking behaviour. Only a couple would potentially switch brands just because the new standards indicated that their brand was not as light as they had thought it was.

They did feel that this information would be very useful to new smokers as a way of making it clear to them that "light" cigarettes are not a safe alternative to regular cigarettes. It could also make it easier for people trying to choose a brand to know what various brands would likely taste like instead of having to actually sample all of them. Smokers tended to feel that government regulations would have to walk a fine line between informing the consumer, making the tobacco companies accountable and also allowing tobacco companies to continue to be able to differentiate their brands.

November 26-27, 1998

**Tobacco Packaging Research (PN4361)
Light and Mild Cigarettes
Final Discussion Agenda**

Introduction (5 minutes)

Introduction to focus group procedures
We want your opinion
Feel free to agree or disagree
You are being taped and observed
There will be a 10 minute break
You will be paid by the hostess at the end

Smoking Behaviour and Attitudes (10 minutes)

1. Let's go around the table so that each of you can tell us your name and a little bit about yourself and also a bit about your smoking background (i.e.: How much do you smoke? At what age did you start?)
2. When do you smoke? Why do you smoke? Why did you start smoking in the first place?
3. What brand do you smoke? Second brand?

Knowledge of Health Risks (5 minutes)

1. What are your opinions of the health risks of smoking? Are you worried about the health risks associated with smoking?
2. What kind of concerns do you have? **LIST HEALTH CONCERNS ON A FLIP CHART**

Choice of Cigarette Brands: (10 minutes)

1. How did you choose the brand of cigarette that you smoke?

PROBE

- friends, parents, your own trial and error?

2. In what way do you find that different cigarette brands differ?

PROBE

- Taste?
 - Strength?
 - Image?
 - How harmful?
3. Are some brands of cigarettes less/more harmful to your health than others?
 4. When you buy cigarettes do you pay any attention to the tar and nicotine levels listed, or is price or image more important?
 5. Do you ever use the tar and nicotine levels stated on cigarettes to choose your cigarettes?

Light and Mild Cigarettes Meaning (20 minutes)

We are going to be discussing "light" and "mild" cigarettes in particular for the next while.

1. What do you think is meant by the term "light" or "mild" cigarette packs? In what way are they lighter or milder than regular cigarettes?

PROBE

- Lighter in tar?
 - Lighter in nicotine?
 - Lighter taste?
 - Lighter colour?
 - Less addictive?
2. I want you each to write down on paper your response to this question. As far as you know, does the term "light" or "mild" on a cigarette pack mean that the cigarettes are any less harmful/safer/healthier than regular cigarettes?
 3. What is it about "light" cigarettes that you think might make them less harmful to a person's health?
 4. Do you think the tobacco itself in "light" or "mild" cigarettes is any different from regular cigarettes?
 5. What about the filter?
 6. Why do you think cigarette companies call some of their cigarettes "light"?
 7. Some people say that the term "light" or "mild" on cigarette packs is just a misleading marketing gimmick. What do you think?

BREAK

Light and Mild Cigarettes – Personal Behaviour (15 minutes)

1. Can you each tell me what your personal experience has been with “light and/or mild” cigarettes? Do you smoke them? Have you tried them?
2. When you first started smoking, did you usually smoke "light" cigarettes or regular cigarettes?
3. Have any of you ever switched from regular to "light" cigarettes? Why?
4. Have any of you ever switched from "light" to regular cigarettes? Why?
5. Did you change your smoking patterns at all when you went from regular to “light” (or vice-versa)? (For example, did you start smoking more light cigarettes?)

PROBE

- Smoking more of them?
 - Deeper inhaling?
 - Smoking right down to the filter?
6. Do you know of any ways of tampering with a “light” cigarette to achieve a more enjoyable smoke? (i.e.: removing filter or covering up the sides of the filter as you smoke)
 7. Are you aware of there being differences in the holes on the side of the filter on “light” cigarettes?

Regulation of Light Cigarettes (15 minutes)

1. Are all "light" cigarettes as a category necessarily lighter in any way from regular cigarettes?
2. Does the term "light" or "mild" on cigarette packs mean anything in terms of being less addictiveness?
 - Additives?
 - Contents?
3. What do you think **should** be meant by the term "light" or "mild" on cigarette packs? Should it mean anything?
4. How much lighter should a "light" cigarette be in tar and nicotine to be called "light" (i.e.: 10% lighter, 20% lighter, 50% lighter etc...)?

PROBE

- Should this be regulated?
5. Do you think there are currently any regulations about what constitutes a "light" cigarette?
 6. What if I told you that there are no regulations in terms of what can be called a "light" cigarette and that any tobacco company can call any cigarette "light"?

PROBE

- Do you think it should be this way, or should the use of the term "light" be regulated?
7. Should the term "light" specifically mean "lighter in tar and nicotine" by regulation?
 8. What if I told you that there is no difference in the tobacco in "light" and regular cigarettes and that sometimes the only difference is how the filter works?

PROBE

- Did you know this?
-
9. What if I told you that “light” cigarettes (to the extent that they are lighter at all) are only light compared to other cigarettes of the same brand? For example, Player’s Light is a bit lighter in tar than Player’s regular, but it is heavier in tar than DuMaurier regular?

 10. Would you still smoke “light” cigarettes if you knew that the amount and strength of the smoke you were inhaling and had virtually identical levels of nicotine and tar as that found in regular cigarettes?

 11. So to wind up, let’s go around the table and each of you can tell us what you think the policy (or if there should be one) on the use of the term “light” cigarettes.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION