

### **Inhaled steroids and the prevention of lung cancer**

**To the Editor:** For some years, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) has been considered a risk factor for the development of lung cancer, independent of smoking<sup>1</sup>.

Several randomized controlled trials of inhaled steroids in COPD have been published recently<sup>2-4</sup>. Together, these studies have enrolled 2,683 COPD patients randomly assigned to receive inhaled steroid therapy or not.

At the same time, results from experimental studies have suggested that inhaled steroids may have a protective effect against pulmonary carcinogenesis<sup>5,6</sup>.

Now that several years have passed since the start of clinical trials, it might be time to seek an answer to this question: is it possible to follow the evolution of these 2683 patients long enough to detect a possible chemopreventive effect?

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