

Smoking and smoking cessation

Cigarette smoking and respiratory system diseases in college students

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Question

The most common health troubles in young people concern respiratory system, chronic bronchitis being the most often. One of the main cause of this illness is cigarette smoking. We present the results of the study concerning the health status, chronic diseases and cigarette smoking of Polish college students.

Methods and Material

The study was conducted in 2010 among 3108 students of 19 colleges located in Mazowsze region, Poland. Individually made questionnaire was used and contained questions concerning the place of living - town or in the country, economic status of the family, profession of parents, the health status, chronic diseases and cigarette smoking. For statistical analysis Statistica 6.0 program was used. Before starting the research the permission from the Ethical Committee of the University was obtained.

Results

There were 1694 males and 1414 females, 15 to 19 years of age. 28,6% of the students smoked cigarettes. From 1694 males 66,4% were no-smokers, 18,1% smoked up to 20 cigarettes daily, and 15,5% more than 20 cigarettes per day. 12,5% smoked longer than 1 year. 38,5% of males reported chronic bronchitis, 21% of non-smokers, and 71% of cigarette smokers.

From 1414 females, 77% were non-smokers, 16% smoked up to 20 cigarettes daily, and 7% more than 20 cigarettes per day. 8% smoked longer than 1 year. 35% of females reported chronic bronchitis, 23% of non-smokers, and 75% of cigarette smokers.

From 3108 respondents, 140 respondents had allergic diseases, but in 118 allergy did not affect respiratory system. Only 22 (0,7%) reported bronchial asthma, none of these students was a smoker.

Males more often than females smoked cigarettes and more often were heavy smokers ($p=0,0001$). Comparing non-smokers and cigarette smokers the number of persons complaining of chronic bronchitis was significantly higher in the group of smokers ($p=0,0001$).

60% of the respondents, but 100% of smokers had at least one smoking parent, more often the father. The place of living - town or in the country, the economic status of the family and the profession of parents had no effect on the percentage of smokers or non-smokers.

There was no statistically significant difference between the percentage of smoking students of the first and the third year of college education.

Conclusions

The study shows, that cigarette smoking is a very important reason of chronic bronchitis in youngsters. It is also very alarming, that in this study, the percentage of smokers among college students was much higher than in previous polish publications. It implies the necessity of extending educational measures concerning smoking and it's harmful effect to the health not only among students, but also among their parents.