

Prevention of respiratory diseases

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AWARENESS OF POLISH PULMONOLOGISTS ABOUT THE IMPACT OF AIR POLLUTION ON HEALTH

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Air pollution causes exacerbation of respiratory diseases. The air quality in Poland is the worst in Europe. The aim of the study was to assess the awareness of Polish pulmonologists about the impact of air pollution on health, the sources of their knowledge and how this knowledge is used in clinical practice. The study was based on a voluntary and anonymous questionnaire created for pulmonologists. The study included 167 pulmonologists (37% of participated in Congress Polish Respiratory Society). There were 32% men and 68% women aged 28-72 years. Only 19% of physicians declared sufficient knowledge regarding the impact of air pollution on overall health. However, self-assessments by physicians, when tested using simple questionnaire shown to be correct in only 1% of them. The main sources of this knowledge were the internet and medical press, however they prefer scientific conferences. Only 13% of pulmonologists know what air pollution concentrations are acceptable. Twenty seven percent of pulmonologists follow the levels of air pollution in their region, and 11% of doctors inform their patients about exceeded air pollution permissible limits. The majority of pulmonologists (69%) do not know what are the main air pollutants in their city. The knowledge of pulmonologists on the impact of air pollution on health is not sufficient, and they need professional education in this area.