

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

In the article entitled “Iranian National Health Survey : A Brief Report” published in the previous issue of Arch Iranian Med 2002; 5 (2): 73 – 9, Dr. A Noorbala, who was involved in performing the survey, has made the following corrections:

The second survey had the same population sampling method (not the same population sample, page 73 second paragraph) as the first survey.

The mean weight of 40 – 49 year old subjects with  $71.9 \pm 12.5$  kg belonged only to males (page 74, right column, first paragraph) and that of females was  $65.3 \pm 13.1$  kg in the second survey. About 1.1% of the sample wore hearing aids (not 1.8%, page 74, right column, second paragraph).

Organ defects were present in 2.7% of the population older than 2 years of age, 25.7% were congenital and 27.2% (not 25%) were caused by accidents (Page 75, left column, paragraph 3). The weight of men and women aged 18 years was higher in the second survey than the first survey (page 76, right column, line 15). In Table 3 on page 77, the weight of 18-year-old and older subjects is shown according to gender (not 2 – 18 yrs).

M.S. Massarrat MD  
Associate Editor  
Archives of Iranian Medicine

Dear Dr. Azarmina,

I would like to congratulate you and all the staff of the *Archives of Iranian Medicine* for the good job you are doing and the recent happy news regarding your successful indexing in EMBASE (the Excerpta Medica Database). We in Ahwaz are planning to produce our own English journal and are sure we will need your advice and expertise in future should we accomplish this difficult task.

Your editorial on the challenges of becoming indexed was informative. As you requested for any comments regarding the journal, I would like to make a few comments regarding two of the articles I read in the April 2002 issue:

1- The article entitled: “Purification of anti-HbsAg from egg yolks...” is lacking two basic points: A) In the *Results* section, the author mentions that “sensitivity and specificity of HbsAg test kit manufactured by Organon Teknika for comparison were determined”. First, this sentence should have been stated in the methods section; and second, the results did not show what these values were for the

Organon as compared with the one they produced from egg yolk. B) *Discussion* section was not conclusive and did not elaborate on the results obtained and their significance and it repeated what was reported in the results.

2- In the article entitled: “Current substance use among psychiatric patients”, the figures in the results shown in the tables do not match the figures in the text. Furthermore, in paragraph 2 of the results “Table 2” should read “Table 1”. The *Discussion* section was inconclusive and reference 9 referred to the situation of substance use among Iranian students in 1976, which is not relevant to this paper since none of the patients were students. Furthermore, the reasons for taking these drugs are not unique among psychiatric patients. All addicts take these drugs for at least one of these reasons.

Despite these small shortfalls, I understand that you are doing a very big job. Keep up the good work you are doing.

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Dear Editor,

I read your article “Iranian National Health Survey : A Brief Report” by Dr. Mohammad-Sadegh Massarrat and Dr. Susan Tahaghoghi-Mehrizi, Arch Iranian Med 2002; 5 (2): 73 – 79, with interest. While I note that the project was well supported by the Ministry and some of the most prominent characters in epidemiology and public health, it is both surprising and unfortunate that no neurological problem was identified among the sample population.

Neurological diseases forms 20-25% of medical referrals in UK and I am sure if the designers of the project had considered this category of diseases, they would have found, not the least, a variety of different headaches, epilepsy, etc. in the population. Neurological diseases like multiple sclerosis, epilepsy, migraine, head injury, and neurodegenerative diseases consumes the largest budget in health care of any nation and I am sure Iran is of no exception. Perhaps this could be considered in future surveys.

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