

EXCERPTS FROM PERSIAN MEDICAL LITERATURE

QUALITATIVE SURVEY ON THE FACTORS AFFECTING TENDENCY TO HOOKAH USAGE IN HORMOZGAN PROVINCE AND APPROPRIATE CAMPAIGN METHODS AGAINST IT

The use of the hookah water pipe has increased in the past few years, especially among younger age groups of Hormozgan Province of Persian Gulf littoral. Hookah smoking, which is popular in Hormozgan Province, has a prevalence rate of 18.8% in the 15-and-over age group.

Objectives of this study were to assess the public opinion in Hormozgan about the predisposing factors to the use of hookah in high-risk groups and its hazards on human health. In addition, this study sought the appropriate proposed methods that could be used in campaigns against hookah usage.

This qualitative study was conducted as a focus group discussion. Eighteen groups of people, each consisting of 8 – 10 individuals comprised of males and females from rural and urban areas, community health workers and well-distinguished people in the area participated in the study. This study illustrated that hookah smoking usually occurs in social meetings and is considered a cultural behavior. Relative cheapness, availability and absence of health education programs against hookah are predisposing factors for the use of hookah. Hookah smoking is more frequent in urban areas, especially among females. Males usually use hookah after middle age. Adolescents have a high tendency to use newly provided tobacco, which has been fortified by a fruity extract. Hazards of hookah are not clear to the residents of Hormozgan Province. Appropriate educational programs and their proposed target audiences are: television programs informing Sunni Moslems via mosques; improving family knowledge by educating mothers; health education in schools as a prevention method for adolescents, and, finally, boosting the role of health personnel to advise the general public to quit hookah smoking.

Based on the results of this study, quitting hookah smoking should be regarded as a group activity. Combating drug abuse is an urgent need in the area that ought to be addressed by provincial authorities.

Authors: Majdzadeh SR, Zamani G, Kazemi SH.

Source: Hakim. 2002; 5 (3): 183 – 87.

TREND OF DRUG ABUSE SITUATION IN IRAN: A THREE-DECADE SURVEY

Because comprehensive and regular epidemiologic studies on substance abuse are lacking in Iran, it is almost impossible to study the alterations in incidence, prevalence, and patterns of substance abuse by comparing the data from such studies. The aim of the current study was to assess the trend of drug abuse incidence in the country in the past three decades. This cross-sectional study was conducted in the major cities of 10 different provinces having various social and cultural characteristics in the year 2000. A total number of 1,500 substance-dependent individuals were selected to be studied in terms of the year of drug abuse initiation, the year of shifting to intravenous drug abuse, patterns of drug abuse, and other relevant factors, by means of a questionnaire. As drug users have always been a hidden population, the samples were approached by three different methods: volunteer drug users seeking treatment at outpatient clinics, drug users in prisons, and street drug users who were approached using a snowballing method.

Although the analysis of the annual incidence of drug abuse showed some fluctuations in the past three decades there was a rising trend over the whole period. The sharpest surge in the incidence was 166%, which belonged to the period of 1973 – 1978. Afterwards, up to year 1987, there was a steady reduction followed by a 59% increase during the period of 1988 – 1992. The average annual rate of increase for the incidence of

drug abuse during the period of 1978 – 1998 was 8%. In other words, the total population of drug users doubled every 12 years. Taking into account the average annual growth rate of the Iranian population, which was 2.63% in the same period, the drug abuser population in the country grew three times faster than the total population. The average rate of increase in the incidence of injection drugs was calculated to be as high as 330% during the past decade and apparently 33% annually.

Authors: Rahimi-Movaghar A, Mohammad K, Razzaghi EM.

Source: Hakim. 2002; 5 (3): 171 – 82.

ROLE OF RUBELLA IN PATIENTS WITH ACUTE FEBRILE RASH IN DIFFERENT PARTS OF IRAN

In this study we tried to evaluate the frequency of acute rubella infection in patients with acute exanthematous disease occurring in different geographical areas of Iran.

Laboratory investigation for detection of acute rubella infection was performed on serum samples of 1,169 patients surveyed in the context of the Measles Elimination Programme, in which acute measles was excluded by laboratory testing. Serological diagnosis of acute rubella was made by demonstration of seroconversion or antibody rise using hemagglutination inhibition test or by detection of IgM in capture IgM EIA. Acute rubella infection was detected in 51.8% of all 1,169 measles-negative cases; the rates were 63.6%, 61% and 29.7% for the northern, central and southern parts of Iran, respectively. The 1,169 measles-negative cases corresponded to a total of 2,728 febrile rash patients; the relative frequency of acute rubella in these patients was 22.2% overall, while it was 37%, 24.9% and 10.5% for northern, central and southern Iran, respectively. The relative frequency of acute rubella in acutely exanthematous patients was 31.1% in those below 15 years old compared to 7.4% in those 15 years or over.

Authors: Tabatabaei H, Vazirian P, Sarijooloo M, et al.

Source: Hakim. 2002; 5 (3): 189 – 94.

BONE MASS DENSITY IN A NORMAL IRANIAN POPULATION AT SHARIATI HOSPITAL (1996)

The bone mass density (BMD) may vary in different countries due to different genetic and environmental factors. This study was performed to determine the BMD in a typical normal population in Iran.

Subjects were selected randomly from different occupational and social classes in Tehran. For each decade and sex, 20 normal subjects were selected (140 men and 140 women). BMD was measured with a Hologic 1000 plus machine by the dual energy X-ray absorptiometry (DEXA) method for the lumbar spine (L₁, L₂, L₃, L₄, L₁-L₄) and the femoral neck (neck, trochanter, intertrochanter, ward, total). Data were treated by polynomial approximation (3rd degree). The obtained curves were compared with the Standard Hologic curves for Caucasians.

In females, the peak bone mass (PBM) was 1.019 g/cm² for the lumbar spine and 0.832 for the femoral neck. In males, PBM was 0.987 g/cm² for the lumbar spine and 0.907 for the femoral neck. The BMD of both lumbar spine and femoral neck were lower than the Hologic standards. For the lumbar spine; the mean difference was 6.5% (2 to 21%, CI = 1) for women and 13.8% (2 to 36%, CI = 1.45) for men. In the femoral neck the mean difference was 5.4% (2 to 16%, CI = 0.96) for women and 4.6% (1 to 14%, CI = 0.96) for men. The BMD of the lumbar spine and the femoral neck was lower in Iranians compared to the Hologic standards for Caucasians. This was seen in all age groups and in both sexes. It was less pronounced for the PBM in spine and was lower in men than in women. A lower BMD of the spine in men was also seen in a cohort of patients with different diseases (inflammatory and non-inflammatory).

Authors: Akbarian M, Davachi F, Salim Zadeh A, et al.

Source: J Fac Med. 2003; 60 (4): 325 – 33.
